Tanong ng Bayan / A29

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■ **Sports / A32**

Araullo, Macasieb triathlon champs

Conflict on VAT bill shakes Joker's group

VAT KA GANYAN KIKO?

By Michael Lim Ubac

IS THE Senate's Wednesday Group led by Sen. Joker Arroyo finally breaking up?

Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, a member of

CONFLICT/ A4

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Party guns for '07 polls, bars pork lovers, 'trapos'

By Volt Contreras

NO "pigs" allowed in this "Noah's Ark."

Kapatiran, a young political party averse to the pork barrel system, has a caricature of Noah's Ark on its membership forms and pamphlets which they distributed the other day, symbolizing the Filipino's longing to flee

PARTY/ A21

Int'l group slams gov't on media slays

Killings traced to culture of violence

By Norman Bordadora

A WIDESPREAD culture of violence—often condoned by government officials—is to blame for the murders of journalists in the Philippines, tagged as the world's second deadliest place for media workers after Iraq.

A fact-finding mission organized by the Brussels-based International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and its local affiliate released its preliminary findings yesterday after looking into the deaths last year of 13 Filipino journalists.

"When such a culture is allowed to flourish at an official level, it is little wonder that aggrieved local strongmen or political figures turn to hitmen to get even with the media," IFJ representative Gerard Noonan said.

"It is completely unacceptable in a country with democratic credentials like the Philippines," Noonan, a reporter for Australia's Sydney Morning Herald, added in a statement released by IFJ's local affiliate, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP).

The killing of journalists, most of them in the provinces, has remained unchecked despite repeated avowals by government officials, from President Macapagal-Arroyo on down, that they cherish press freedom and will protect it.

Noonan said the mission discovered instances of government officials, including mayors in two major cities, who openly supported the use of death squads in dealing with unruly elements in their areas.

Team members also cited remarks supposedly made in jest by some of those in power that tended to encourage violence against journalists.

"When we went to Legazpi City, the local journalists immediately told us of the provincial PNP director who was quoted as saying, 'When I see media people, it seems that I suddenly have the urge to kill,'" said Rowena Carranza-Paraan, NUJP treasurer and managing editor of the online weekly

INT'L/ A8

Recall VAT bill, Joker urges GMA

RECALLING the House-approved bill seeking to raise the value-added tax (VAT) rate to 12 percent is the "safer course" for President Macapagal-Arroyo "because whatever the outcome is in the Senate, it's not worth the political price it will cost her," Sen. Joker Arroyo said on the eve of the Senate public hearing on the measure.

The senator, a member of the majority bloc, said the proposed VAT rate increase was "divisive" as shown by the deliberations conducted in the House of Representatives last week.

A number of legislators walked out of the House after failing to block the tax measure. They said they would join the anti-VAT mass actions planned by militant groups.

Opponents of the bill claim that a VAT increase will be an added burden to the poor because it will lead to higher prices.

Despite the senator's appeal, the President is pushing for the approval of the measure in the Senate where some of her

RECALL/ A6

No risk, no gain sure path to failure

By Amando Doronila

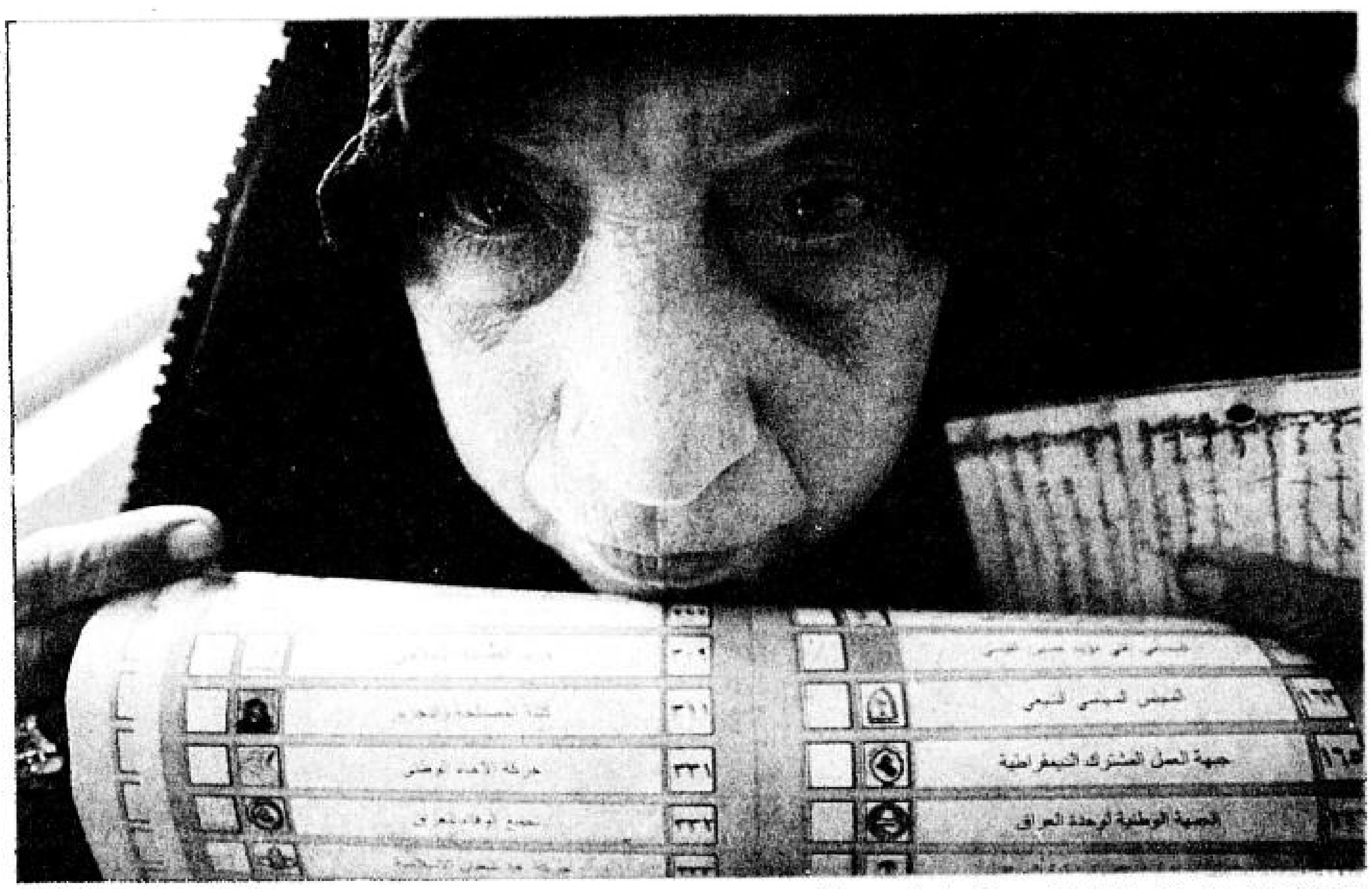
ANALYSIS

OVER the past seven months, President Macapagal-Arroyo has revamped her Cabinet three times—in July and August last year and last week. The changes reflect the administration's response to shifting priorities.

While it would be erroneous to view these as discontinuities, they reveal a leadership style whose defining element during its first six months in office is lack of audacity and boldness in initiatives.

The first three or six months of a newly elected administration is normally a period of high expectations for fundamental

NO RISK/ A21



AN IRAQI woman holds her ballot and ID card as she readies to vote at a polling station in the mainly Shiite Muslim city of Sadr. On Sunday, Iraq held its first free elections since 1953. AFP

36 killed in election attacks in Iraq

BAGHDAD, Iraq—Iraqis turned out to vote on Sunday in their country's first free election in a half-century, defying insurgents who launched deadly suicide bombings and mortar strikes at polling stations. By midday, at least 36 people were dead but the violence had slowed and voting picked up.

Casting his vote, interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi called it "the first time the Iraqis will determine their destiny." The head of the main Shiite cleric-endorsed ticket, Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim, said: "God willing, the elections will be good ... Today's voting is very important."

Despite the heavy attacks that began two hours after polls opened, turnout was brisk in many Shiite Muslim and mixed Shiite-Sunni neighborhoods, both in Baghdad and in southern cities like Basra.

Even in the small town of Askan in the so-called "triangle of death" south of Baghdad—a mixed Sunni-Shiite area—20 people waited in line at each of several polling centers. More walked toward the polls.

"This is democracy," said an elderly woman in a black *abaya*, Karfia Abbasi, holding up a thumb stained with purple

36 KILLED/ A8

THE 14-pound "Pearl of Allah" as shown in 2003 photo. AP

$60-M pearl tied to misfortunes

DENVER—Legend has it that the so-called Pearl of Allah was created as a symbol of peace 2,500 years ago in ancient China. To Victor Barbish, the 6.4-kg gem—found in the Philippines more than 70 years ago—has been nothing but a big headache.

The rugby ball-sized grayish lump has been tied to enough greed, drama and intrigue to rival any Agatha Christie mystery, including two contract killings and a court fight that ended with one of the largest jury awards of its type in state history.

Appraisers have valued the pearl at $60 million, lawyers said.

"It draws the wrong type of people," said Barbish, the pearl's majority owner. "It has a nice history. It was made to do something good, apparently, but what it's been drawing—it's been terrible."

Barbish said he kept the pearl in a Denver bank vault and safe deposit boxes over the years, but he won't disclose its present location, even though he'd like to unload the gem to a museum or a library.

How the pearl wound up in Colorado is quite a tale—an extraordinary one, if rumors are to be believed. It purportedly started as an amulet of Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu, said to have carved his face and those of Confucius and Buddha on its surface.

It was then planted in successively larger clams

$60-M PEARL/ A22

GOING SOFT, PLAYING SAFE

Major players elude gov't drive against illegal logging in Aurora

By Luz Rimban

Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism

(First of two parts)

AT A wedding late last year, the bride and the groom became the privileged godchildren of a high government official who was one of their many sponsors.

The event would have passed unnoticed, except that the *padrino* was Environment Secretary Michael Defensor and the Chinese-Filipino family involved owned a company that had its tree-harvesting operations suspended by Defensor's immediate predecessor at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The suspension was imposed on Toplite Lumber Corp., owned by the Chua family, in 2003, after an investigation revealed that it had been cutting trees beyond its designated area. Earlier, Toplite had been granted an Integrated Forestry Management Agreement (Ifma), with a permit to cut trees on 8,000 hectares of land in Aurora.

No action had been taken on Toplite's appeal for a lifting of the suspension order until the time of Defensor who, after he became DENR chief last September, had agreed to stand as godfather at the wedding. Sometime after the Chua nuptials, a disaster that was later linked to logging hit Aurora and neighboring provinces, leaving towns buried in mud, tens of thousands of people homeless, and some 1,500 people either dead or missing.

Toplite is one of only five firms holding timber and forestry permits in Aurora. It has appeared in environmental groups' list of alleged violators of forestry laws. Yet it has so far escaped investigation for its complicity in the recent tragedy, which many people, including government officials, have blamed on "illegal logging."

DENR veterans say the lack of official interest in Toplite does not surprise them. Wood is big business, after all, and lumber and logging fami-

MAJOR/ A22

MISS CHINESE INT'L

Filipino candidate Mary Grace Siy Sy (right), 21, performs with illuminated balls along with other contestants during Saturday's preliminary stage of the Miss Chinese International beauty pageant in Hong Kong. AP

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/31/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Special fund eyed for pre-need firms

By Christine O. Avendaño and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

A SPECIAL fund, similar to the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., is being proposed for the pre-need industry to compensate affected policy holders in the wake of the financial troubles rocking College Assurance Plan Phil. Inc., the country's largest pre-need provider.

Sen. Mar Roxas said yesterday he has filed Senate Bill No. 1896 proposing the creation of the Planholders Protection Fund to protect the interests of policy holders affected by the closure or collapse of pre-need firms.

Under his bill, planholders of a bankrupt pre-need firm may claim up to P100,000 each from the fund which shall pay all claims within six months of filing.

At present, planholders of pre-need firms have no means of recovering any of the money they invested in the event these firms collapse. The bill seeks to address this problem, Roxas said.

ROXAS

In a statement, Roxas said the establishment of the Planholders Protection Fund is similar to the concept behind the creation of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., which extends protection to bank depositors.

Pre-need firms shall be initially required to contribute P1 million each to the fund, according to Roxas' bill.

A contribution then of one-half of one percent of total payments made on existing plans shall be remitted quarterly to the fund. Any income generated by the fund shall remain with the fund.

Roxas filed the bill in response to the controversy now plaguing CAP, which has over 780,000 planholders whose education now depends on the continued operations of the pre-need firm.

Roxas earlier urged the public to discontinue paying the amortization of their CAP plans.

Three Senate committees are set hold hearings this week on the financial woes of CAP following a privilege speech last week by Sen. Sergio Osmeña III who disclosed that the pre-need firm was bankrupt and should stop selling new plans and collecting payment on existing ones.

The Securities and Exchange Commission suspended CAP's license to sell educational plans last year.

On Sept. 30 last year, a SEC oversight committee recommended the closure of CAP after it was found to be insolvent.

SEC chair Fe Barin, however, ignored the recommendation due to its possible adverse implications on CAP's planholders nationwide.

"If we close it (CAP), planholders would be at the losing end. At the end of the day, planholders would still have no money to pay tuition fees," Barin said

Yesterday, Malacañang backed SEC's decision not to shut CAP down.

"We have to follow the proper process, if not we will have instability in our institutions," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in an interview over RMN radio.

Bunye assured the public that the government was not disregarding the complaints aired by CAP beneficiaries. "We will let the SEC do its job and handle all complaints on this matter," Bunye said.

Barin has decided to give CAP more time to find new investors that would pump more capital into the company, instead of pulling the plug on the firm as recommended by the oversight committee.

CAP is currently in talks with First America Investments of the United States for a $300-million loan to pay off its planholders.

It has also proposed to increase its capital from P300 million to P8 billion through a property-for-share swap involving P6 billion worth of CAP shares for 2,900 hectares of property in Aurora province owned by Green Circle and Green Square Properties of the Roxas group.

CAP has also assured its planholders that it would honor all its obligations.

Roll back hiked water rates, urge consumers

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

CONSUMER groups asked the National Water Resources Board on Friday to declare the rate increase granted Maynilad by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System as "invalid, unjustified and illegal."

The Lopez-owned Maynilad Water Services, which provides water to the west zone in Metro Manila, increased its rates from P19.92 to P30.19 per cubic meter this year.

Through a complaint, the groups also asked the NWRB to order a refund of payments already made since the rate increase was implemented on Jan. 1.

Maynilad corporate communications officer Jess Matubis said the rate hike was necessary to "help us cope with our foreign exchange losses and make the company more viable."

Bantay Tubig spokesperson Jude Esguerra, who helped the groups file their complaint, said the rate increase would give Maynilad an "unauthorized income of about P2.5 million every month."

In their complaint, the petitioners said the increase violated several procedures.

They alleged that Maynilad had not fulfilled any of the six conditions (like the payment of concession fees) the MWSS had listed in a resolution allowing the Lopez-owned concession to increase rates.

Maynilad and MWSS did not hold any public consultation for the rate hike, the groups added.

The groups also said that MWSS had no legal basis to grant Maynilad any increase because "it had already terminated Maynilad's contract."

The MWSS Regulatory Office had earlier issued a Notice of Concession Event Termination in 2003, the groups added.

With the new rate fully implemented, families using 10 cubic meters of water every month would have to pay P34.56 more (from P75.23 to P109.79) monthly, a table from Bantay Tubig showed.

Residential consumers using 30 cubic meters would shell out P156.88 more (from P317.12 to P474). Higher rates would apply to business establishments.

"The real intention behind the approval of the tariff is to bail out the financially bankrupt Maynilad," the groups said in a press statement.

Matubis denied this.

Other groups had earlier asked the government to terminate the contract of Maynilad.

In a press conference yesterday, leaders of the groups also lambasted Maynilad's inefficient service.

Cop says medal has nothing to do with botched raid

A RANKING lawman is to receive the Philippine National Police's second highest award today but he said the citation had nothing to do with his participation in the controversial raid on a Muslim center that led to the arrest of 17 suspected terrorists earlier this month.

"The award is not based on the operation which I, in fact, did not lead," Senior Supt. Federico Laciste said. "It was based on my other accomplishments in criminal investigation."

Laciste said his unit, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group-National Capital Region branch, did participate in the raid, but only "as a support unit, just like the Western Police District."

The raid, which outraged the Muslim community, was in fact led by the CIDG's Criminal Investigation and Detection Division headed by Supt. Alejandro Gutierrez and Task Force Moses of Senior Supt. Alen Batolo, Laciste said.

Police claimed to have found homemade bombs and weapons during the raid just before the celebration of Quiapo's Feast of the Black Nazarene and that five of the 17 people detained belonged to a terrorist group called "Hukbong Khalid Trinidad," part of a clandestine movement seeking to convert Christians to Islam and use them to carry out terror attacks.

Some of those detained and later released accused the police of planting the evidence. Muslims were also outraged that the policemen entered a praying room without taking off their shoes.

Christian V. Esguerra

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Solon, workers score new GMA appointees

By Carlito Pablo

A LAWMAKER yesterday urged Malacañang to recall the appointment of Alberto Lina as the new commissioner of the Bureau of Customs.

Rep. Joseph Santiago (NPC, Catanduanes) said Lina, a brother of former Interior Secretary Joey Lina, was "unfit for the post due to potential conflicts of interest."

Santiago said Lina was the chair of Airfreight 2100 Inc., a licensee of Federal Express Philippines Inc., and other firms with "regular transactions with the BOC."

These firms include U-Freight Philippines Inc., Cargohaus Inc., Customs Broker Inc. and O-Ocean Inc.

Lina will replace Commissioner George Jereos who is retiring on Feb. 21.

"It would not be appropriate for someone so intimately identified with so many private companies that routinely conduct business with the BOC to lead that agency," Santiago said.

He suggested that Finance Secretary-designate Cesar Purisima should instead be allowed to pick a new commissioner for the BOC, an agency under the Department of Finance.

Rep. Abraham Mitra (LP, Palawan) earlier recommended the appointment of former Sen. Wigberto Tañada to the BOC, an agency which Tañada headed after the 1986 Edsa revolt.

Meanwhile, workers in Southern Tagalog expressed outrage over the appointment of Juan "JB" Santos as the new trade secretary, calling the official "a notorious union buster."

Diosdado Fortuna, chair of Pagkakaisa ng Manggagawa sa Timog Katagalugan (Pamantik-KMU), said the country's workers would face a bleak future with Santos as the new head of the Department of Trade and Industry.

Fortuna, who is president of the workers union at the Nestlé Cabuyao plant, described Santos during his term as the first Filipino president of the Swiss-owned Nestlé Philippines Inc. as "well-experienced in promoting anti-worker policies to the extent of using criminal means just as he did to workers in Southern Tagalog and in other regions," he said.

He added that under Santos' management, thousands of workers were retrenched in various Nestlé plants in the Philippines.

"If he had blatantly violated a Supreme Court ruling favoring the inclusion of retirement benefits in the Nestlé workers' CBA, then he could also deprive the whole working class of the same privileges on a national scale," Fortuna said.

In a statement, Anakpawis party-list Rep. Crispin Beltran said he would file a petition at the Commission on Appointments against Santos' appointment. *With Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Guingona son is no 'papa's boy'

IT WON'T be a case of "like father, like son" for Rep. Teofisto Guingona III (LDP, Bukidnon).

Guingona said he would remain with the opposition in the House of Representatives even though his father, former Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr., has rejoined the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The elder Guingona, who supported the late Fernando Poe Jr. in the last presidential elections and had been at odds with the President over policy issues, accepted the post of Philippine ambassador to China.

"No, definitely not," the young Guingona said when asked if he would cross over to the administration coalition in the House.

"My better role is in fiscalizing government policies and directions," Guingona said.

He said he did not see any conflict in remaining with the opposition while his father worked for the administration.

"My father's post is an ambassadorship. It would have been somewhat different if he accepted a line function post like department secretary," Guingona said. *Carlito Pablo*

Family planning drive sans pills won't work, say critics

By Blanche S. Rivera

"IT'S JUST a waste of money."

Three weeks before its scheduled launching nationwide, the Department of Health's P100-million Ligtas-Buntis campaign is being questioned by population management advocates who see no need for it.

Mercedes Concepcion, a commissioner of the DOH-attached agency Commission on Population, said the planned door-to-door campaign on family planning would only lead to more frustrated couples whose need for contraceptives could not be met by the government.

"It won't work if you just coast along without the supplies. You will only create a demand and end up with a lot of frustrated couples," Concepcion said at a recent forum hosted by the Philippine Press Institute.

"They think the family planning information would be analogous to the DOH's efforts to provide immunization... but unlike polio, family planning is not addressed with one drop," she said.

The Ligtas-Buntis campaign is a take-off from the DOH's nationwide immunization campaigns in the past such as the successful Ligtas-Tigdas last year.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said some 15,000 barangay health workers assisted by volunteers from nongovernment organizations and party-list groups would be deployed on Feb. 21 for the door-to-door Ligtas-Buntis 2005 campaign.

The month-long campaign would be held in coordination with local governments, but follow-up or monitoring of its effectiveness would not be measured until the next national survey.

"What do you hope to accomplish by going house to house? What is the point? You will just go back to the same old issue, which is a high unmet need," Philippine Center for Population and Development executive director Marissa Camacho-Reyes said.

She stressed the need to equip the health workers involved in the campaign not just with contraceptives but with the proper training to educate couples who prefer natural family planning methods.

The NFP, which the government is promoting for responsible parenthood, has not been very popular because of its tediousness. Studies also showed that only 28 percent of women knew when they were fertile.

"If they are thoroughly successful with the campaign, what do you do with couples who want to practice artificial methods? Do they have the people who will teach couples who prefer NFP? Is the system ready to respond? You will only bring the unmet need higher if there are no services or support," Reyes said.

Reyes said the campaign has raised more questions than answers, adding the whole event would be a waste without the necessary support services.

She said she couldn't believe the health chief did not foresee these problems before announcing the kick-off of Ligtas-Buntis.

Dayrit assured the public that barangay health workers participating in the campaign would bring along pills and other available contraceptives worth P100 million.

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Conflict on VAT bill shakes Joker's group

From page A1

the influential bloc within the majority in the upper chamber, yesterday disclosed that he was supporting the proposal to increase the rate of the value-added tax (VAT) from 10 percent to 12 percent.

Pangilinan's stand runs counter to the position taken by Arroyo and Senators Manuel Villar and Ralph Recto—the other members of the group.

Enunciating Malacañang's stand, Pangilinan said that while a VAT increase might not be pro-poor, it would help stave off a fiscal crisis.

"Under normal circumstances, I would oppose increasing the VAT as it perpetuates an unequal tax structure, and the tax burden will be clearly felt by the ordinary citizen," he said.

But he said the country would need to swallow the bitter pill to avert a fiscal crisis which, according to him, would adversely affect the poor.

Pangilinan clarified his position on the increase in the VAT rate following media reports that he was against it because he had said that the P208.1 billion in uncollected VAT from 1998 to 2002 should be addressed first.

In clarifying his position, the young senator may be trying to distance himself from the group that sheltered him from the day he first set foot in the chamber in 2001.

He is caught between the devil and the deep blue sea, said a well-placed Senate source.

On the one hand, he has to toe the line of Malacañang which was instrumental in his being elected majority leader. As such, he is expected to speak on behalf of administration senators even if he does not agree with the official position all the time.

On the other, Pangilinan is politically indebted to Senator Arroyo, a veteran lawmaker, and the rest of the group that meets every Wednesday (Vice President Noli de Castro was a member when he was still a senator).

Power struggle

Villar earlier admitted that since 2001, the group had played a crucial role in maintaining President Arroyo's dominance in the chamber.

Every time the minority tried to rock the boat, the group was always waiting in the wings, ready to come to the aid of Senate President Franklin Drilon, he said.

Besides ensuring that the administration bloc has a tight grip on the Senate leadership, the group acts as a watchdog of sorts within the majority by blocking administration measures that could adversely affect the public, according to Villar.

But things changed when Pangilinan joined the Liberal Party. He later became its vice chair, while Drilon was elected LP president.

Senator Arroyo has officially taken a stand against any VAT increase, rebuking Drilon last week for claiming that the majority would support the bill.

Energy sector

Arroyo said the solution to the cash-flow problems of the government lies within the "grossly mismanaged" energy sector, which currently enjoys hefty tax holidays.

"Look at the picture. Since the 13th Congress convened last July 2004, it has not enacted any significant legislation. It is stuck with tax measures which has preoccupied it since then," he said.

Arroyo said that in passing the tax measures espoused by Malacañang, "Congress has abdicated its constitutional primacy to lay down policy on economic matters and it has yielded that to Moody's and company." Moody's is an international credit rating agency.

Villar and Recto, chair of the Senate committees on finance and on ways and means, respectively, said the fiscal problems of the government could be solved within the executive branch itself.

Efficient collection

They believe that plugging loopholes in VAT collections and increasing the revenue collection efficiency of the government, which currently stands at a measly 12 percent (of gross domestic product), are doable if the President exercises enough political will to crack the whip on revenue and customs officials.

Pangilinan, however, "guaranteed" that an increased VAT would not have to burden the taxpayer indefinitely.

"It can be a temporary measure that should last for only a maximum of three to five years. This sunset provision can help soothe the burden and allay fears of ordinary citizens," he said.

During the three- to five-year period, Congress must remove all tax exemptions, he said.

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2nd to 61st Placers - Outlay of P171,000 for each of the sixty (60) scholars to cover tuition and other basic miscellaneous school fees throughout the course in any of the four- or five-year programs requiring board exams offered at the TIP P10,260,000.00

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2nd to 51st Placers - Outlay of P125,400.00 for each of the fifty (50) scholars to cover tuition and other basic miscellaneous school fees throughout the Accountancy program at TIP Manila P6,270,000.00

52nd to 131st Placers - Outlay of P13,630.00 for each of the eighty (80) scholars to cover tuition and other basic miscellaneous school fees for one (1) semester in the Accountancy program at TIP Manila P1,090,400.00

Total........P7,545,800.00

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2nd to 41st Placers - Outlay of P171,000.00 for each of the forty (40) scholars to cover tuition and other basic miscellaneous school fees throughout the Architecture program or in any four- or five-year Engineering program requiring board examinations offered at the TIP P6,840,000.00

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■ Pres. Elpidio Quirino Friday, March 4, 2005
■ Gov. Demetrio Quirino, Sr. Friday, March 11, 2005
■ Sec. Guillermo De Vega Friday, March 18, 2005

SCHEDULE OF EXAMINATIONS:
■ Pres. Elpidio Quirino Saturday, March 5, 2005
■ Gov. Demetrio Quirino, Sr. Saturday, March 12, 2005
■ Sec. Guillermo De Vega Saturday, March 19, 2005

■ TIME AND PLACE OF EXAMINATIONS:
9:00-11:00 AM, TIP MANILA AND TIP QUEZON CITY

OTHER ENTRANCE SCHOLARSHIPS AND DISCOUNTS

	CATEGORY	GRANTS	PERIOD COVERED
1.	HONOR STUDENTS		
1.1	Valedictorian	Free Tuition and Basic Miscellaneous Fees	2 Semesters
		P1,000.00 Stipend per Semester	2 Semesters
1.2	Salutatorian	Free Tuition and Basic Miscellaneous Fees	2 Semesters
		P1,000.00 Stipend per Semester	1 Semester
1.3	3rd-10th Ranking High School Graduate	Free Tuition and Basic Miscellaneous Fees	1 Semester
2.	OTHER DISCOUNTS BASED ON GENERAL AVERAGE IN 4TH YEAR HIGH SCHOOL OR FINAL GRADE IN MATH IV, ENGLISH IV, OR SCIENCE IV		
2.1	90% or above	Free Tuition and Basic Miscellaneous Fees	1 Semester
2.2	85% - 89%	Free Tuition Fee	1 Semester
2.3	83% - 84%	80% Discount on Tuition Fee	1 Semester
2.4	81% - 82%	60% Discount on Tuition Fee	1 Semester
2.5	80%	50% Discount on Tuition Fee	1 Semester

Efforts to ease world hunger off track—report

By Isagani M. Yambot
Publisher

DAVOS, Switzerland—If present trends continue, about 600 million people will go hungry in 2015, far more than the projected 400 million, the Global Governance Initiative Annual Report said.

The report, submitted to the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum which wound up here Saturday, said that on a scale of 10, global efforts to reduce hunger scored only a three. Efforts to reduce poverty got only a four.

The international goal, set by the heads of state at the World Food Summit in 1996, was to reduce the number of people suffering from hunger—currently at about 800 million—by half by 2015. The deadline for the Millennium Development Goals is also 2015.

On poverty, the target was to reduce the proportion of people with incomes less than $1 a day by 50 percent between 1990 and 2015, from 28 to 14 percent (a central Millennium Development Goal).

Less than $1 a day

The report was made by a panel headed by Sartaj Aziz, former finance and foreign minister of Pakistan, and Joachim von Braun, director general of the International Food Policy Research Institute.

The low scores given by the report indicate that the world is not on track to meet the poverty and hunger targets.

To reach the goal of reducing the number of hungry people to 400 million by 2015, the current pace of hunger reduction would have to be accelerated more than 12 times.

"Barring a paradigm shift, this scenario will not materialize," the report said.

The report said the total number of people surviving on less than $1 a day has gone down by only 72 million in the last decade, leaving more than one billion in absolute poverty.

Latin America and the Caribbean saw no decrease in the number of people living in absolute poverty. In sub-Saharan Africa and Eastern Europe, the situation has deteriorated significantly, the report said.

Poverty reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Near East and North America was forecast to be minimal, if present trends continue. In sub-Saharan Africa, the poverty rate was expected to continue at a staggering 45 percent.

Only in Asia

Only South Asia and East Asia were projected to reduce the incidence of poverty significantly by 2015.

The report called on governments to increase investments in clean water, education and health care. It also stressed the need for improving governance, promoting fair trade between the farmers of developing countries and industrialized nations, reducing the debt burden of heavily indebted poor nations, providing safety nets for poor households and reforming agriculture.

The report stressed the role that the private sector could play, not just by giving aid but by investing in markets in developing countries.

The Global Governance Initiative, which issued the report, was created by the World Economic Forum.

"In 2004, world leaders made progress [in the effort to reduce hunger and poverty levels] only in words and planning," Von Braun said. He added that 2005 has to be a year of concerted action if the world is to come anywhere near reaching the goals by 2015.

'One-size-fits-all'

Last Wednesday, an update session on poverty noted that the "rigid, top-down, North-imposed one-size-fits-all" strategy to reduce poverty was starting to thaw.

"We had the Washington Consensus which called for stability, liberalization and privatization," said David T. Ellwood, dean of the John F. Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University. "But we haven't made much progress over the last decade, which is a cause for pessimism. Even where we had those three conditions, like Latin America, there were no success stories. So our challenge today is: What comes next?"

The panelists saw economic growth as the key driver of poverty reduction throughout the world. But they acknowledged that growth alone was not enough to insure long-term equity and social cohesion.

Cyclical growth

Christopher Colclough, director of the Centre for Commonwealth Education of Cambridge University, said: "Growth is cyclical. We can't project the strong past two years to 2015, the deadline for the Millennium Development Goals."

He also noted that growth is uneven, and that there are concentrations of extreme wealth and extreme poverty within a single region or nation. As a measure of progress, it only makes sense when applied, as with China, when set in a macro context, he added.

NGO backs new Japan policy on entertainer visa

By TJ Burgonio

AFTER facing tough opposition in Manila over its decision to do something about the trafficking in young Filipino women, the Japanese government has finally found an ally in a local women's nongovernment organization.

The Development Action for Women Network (Dawn), which had lobbied the Philippine government to put a stop to the trafficking for years now, described Japan's new policy designed to regulate the entry of Filipino entertainers into that country as "a dream come true."

"It's a dream come true for us; we've been lobbying for it for the last nine years. We hope the Japanese government will stand by its decision," said Dawn executive director Carmelita Nuqui in an interview.

"We support the Japanese immigration policy because for us, any extension, any minute of extension, means more women having broken bodies and shattered dreams," Nuqui said, citing figures that 90 percent of the women were forced into prostitution.

Brushing aside appeals for a moratorium, the Japanese government had declared that its policy was "final" and that it was merely waiting for its justice ministry to finalize the implementing rules and regulations before enforcing it.

Under the new measure, Japan will require Filipinos to present proof of a two-year training in music, dance or singing or two years' entertainment experience outside Japan before they would be issued an entertainer visa.

Previously, it only required the Philippine government to issue a certification of an entertainer's skills in the form of an artist record book and, recently, an artist accreditation card.

The government, as well as the entertainers and their managers, had sought a moratorium fearing the policy would displace the thousands of Filipino entertainers now in Japan and cut off a major source of foreign exchange remittances.

The Japanese Embassy issues an average of 80,000 entertainer visas a year.

"It's sad that the government is missing the point. It's merely looking at the dollar remittances without addressing the social cost to the women and their children," Nuqui said.

Court steno would rather be caregiver

ALL SHE wanted was to make a better future for her family.

So much so that when an opportunity came to work in the United Arab Emirates, stenographer Raquel Bautista left her job at the Guiguinto (Bulacan) Municipal Trial Court without getting the proper authorization from her superiors, thus earning the ire of the Supreme Court.

In a 10-page ruling on Jan. 13, the high tribunal dismissed Bautista for abandoning her post to work as a caregiver in Dubai.

The court said Bautista lied when she claimed that she was remaining in the country when she went on vacation. She also failed to get a clearance to leave the country.

And in her hurry to fly to her new job, Bautista failed to submit the transcripts of seven criminal cases she was supposed to transcribe, the court said.

"The alleged urgency of her job abroad is no justification for her dishonest conduct which has no place in the judiciary," the tribunal said.

The high court ordered the forfeiture of all her benefits and privileges, except accrued leave credits, and barred her from future employment in the government.

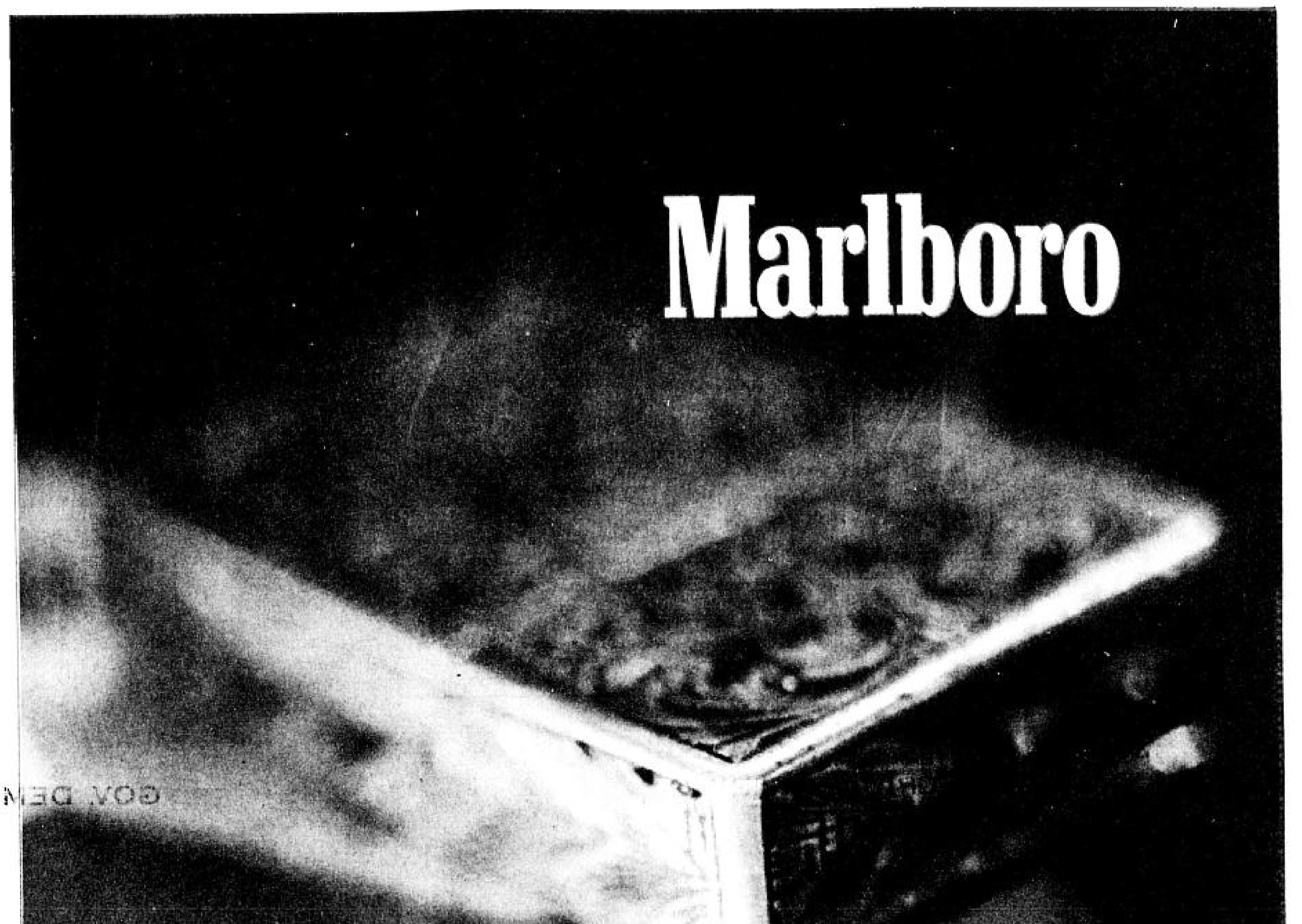
Court records showed Bautista applied for a leave in October 2003 and from November 2003 to January 2004.

Her immediate superior, Judge Luis Enriquez Reyes, approved her leave after reminding her to finish the transcripts of the cases assigned to her.

"(Reyes) was surprised when he learned that (Bautista) had already left the country (on Oct. 16, 2003), considering that her application for leave had stated that she would be spending her vacation in the Philippines," the tribunal said.

Bautista said she decided to work overseas "to give her family a better future" and that she was not able to secure the required clearances because she was "urgently needed" at her new job.

Philip C. Tubeza



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Recall VAT bill–Joker

From page A1

allies are expected to join forces with the opposition in rejecting the bill.

"I would like to appeal to our senators to stay the course with me on the VAT issue at this critical point in our economy. There can never be a better time to demonstrate our enlightened leadership to liberate the poor from cyclic poverty and bring them to lasting prosperity," the President said in a rare statement issued on her rest day.

She issued the statement after Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile claimed that the VAT increase would be jettisoned in the Senate.

Enrile said at least four administration senators—Arroyo, Manuel Villar, Francis Pangilinan and Ralph Recto—would join the nine-member opposition in shooting down the bill. The Senate has 23 members.

But Pangilinan issued a statement yesterday that he was supporting the bill. *(See story on Page A1.)*

"I respect the views of the senators and I know their noble intentions. But we have gained clear momentum in our fiscal reforms and we must not turn back the clock of urgent change," the President said. "I trust in the wisdom and statesmanship of our senators to hold our banner higher for the future generations of Filipinos."

Along with the President's statement, Malacañang released a copy of Pangilinan's statement.

Roxas said yesterday he was keeping an open mind on proposals to amend the VAT. He acknowledged he was concerned about the fiscal crisis facing the government, which he described as a "menacing cancer."

"If chemotherapy by way of VAT reforms will help us cure the malignant tumor, then we could possibly consider supporting the VAT reforms, but only as an emergency measure, and only on certain conditions," he said in a statement.

Roxas said he was prepared to consider the reforms provided the changes would include sustaining the exemptions granted basic goods and prime commodities.

Exhaustive open hearings

Today, the Senate ways and means committee chaired by Sen. Ralph Recto is expected to open public hearings on the proposed VAT rate increase.

Recto said the committee hearings would be "exhaustive and open."

"No sector will be left out," Recto said in a statement. "We have invited sugar planters, realtors, ship owners, market vendors. We will be inviting socialists and socialites, taipans and *timawas* (a Visayan term for poor)."

Invited to today's hearing were newly named Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, Economic Planning Secretary Romy Neri and leaders of consumer groups, including that of Raul Concepcion.

Recto said anti-VAT guests should not only oppose but also propose. "If VAT is unpalatable, then what is your alternative?" he said.

Conscience votes

At the end of the debates, Senator Arroyo expects that "there will be a lot of conscience votes within the majority."

Senate President Franklin Drilon said he hoped those opposed to the measure would "keep an open mind and come up with alternative measures" on how government could solve its fiscal problems.

"I respect the views of my colleagues and I am willing to listen to alternative proposals," Drilon said in a statement.

He said he was open to ideas on how lawmakers could prevent the VAT from being passed on to the consumers.

He said the people should not be burdened with more taxes in these difficult times but he noted that even the opposition recognized the need to raise P80 billion a year.

Drilon warned that failure by Congress and the executive department to come up with measures to raise revenues would hurt the poor in the long-term. "Painful as it is, a do-nothing scenario could bring more harm to the economy and to the people."

So far, Congress has passed two of eight tax measures that aim to raise P80 billion a year. These are the excise tax on alcohol and tobacco products and the Lateral Attrition Act, which provides a reward and penalty system for tax collecting agencies.

The VAT bill, which the House passed on third and final reading last week, is expected to raise about P35 billion.

In the House, the chair of the appropriations committee warned that a Senate rejection of the bill raising the VAT rate and other House-approved tax measures would jeopardize the funding requirements of the still pending 2005 budget measure and jack up government borrowings.

"The Senate will be passing a partially unfunded budget if it does not pass the tax measures which the House has sent to the Senate for its concurrence," Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. (LP, Camarines Sur) said. "The 2005 budget is premised on the adoption of revenue measures." *Christine O. Avendaño, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Carlito Pablo*

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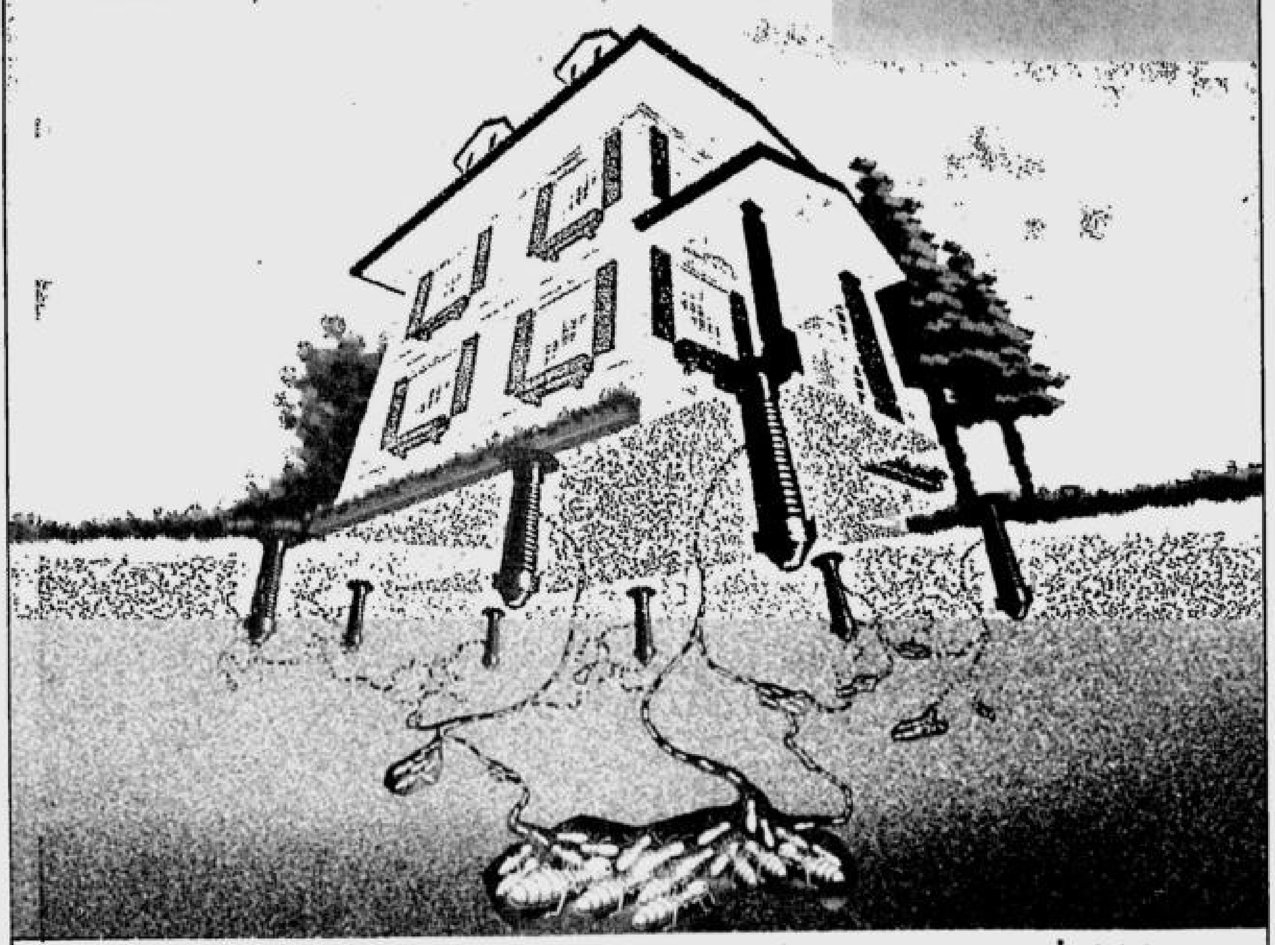

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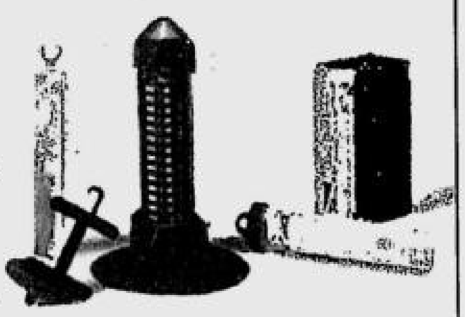

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Daring rescue of POWs during WWII recalled

By Anselmo Roque
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CABANATUAN CITY—Though not as elaborate as the celebrations of other World War II events, the 60th anniversary of what was recognized as the "most daring and successful rescue mission in military history" was commemorated here on Sunday.

The rescue mission, staged on Jan. 30, 1945, at the Cabanatuan concentration camp in Barangay Pangatian here, liberated 516 American prisoners of war.

Over 400 Filipino guerrilla fighters from Nueva Ecija participated in the rescue. Thousands of civilians from the province also participated in various ways.

The former camp, 10 km east of the city proper, was more than 4,000-sqm in size and surrounded by a barbed wire fence.

The camp—the mobilization and training camp of the Philippine Army before the war—was taken over by Japanese soldiers and used as a concentration camp for allied POWs.

It was said to be the biggest concentration camp of the Japanese Imperial Army at the time.

At least 3,000 POWs died there due to malnutrition, dysentery and other ailments, and from severe beatings by Japanese soldiers.

During the sunrise service attended by war veterans and their relatives yesterday, Gov. Tomas Joson III said he was happy the liberation of Pangatian was being recognized not only in the Philippines but throughout the world.

One of those who participated in the rescue was Joson's father, the late Gov. Eduardo Joson. The older Joson, then a captain and leader of Squadron 213 of the guerrilla fighters, and Capt. Juan Pajota, carried out the mission.

The current governor said he learned about the "great event" only through the book "Ghost Soldiers" by Hampton Sides. The American author was one of the guests during the program.

Joson said he hoped the rescue would be widely publicized through the Hollywood-produced movie "The Great Raid" which is expected to be shown soon in the Philippines.

In the movie, local actor Cesar Montano played the part of Pajota.

A museum showcasing the liberation of Pangatian and exhibiting memorabilia from the war and the struggles of the Filipino and allied forces was also unveiled here yesterday.

In 2003, the raid was given due recognition and was acknowledged as "one of the most daring and successful rescue missions of its type in the annals of military history."

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, who represented President Macapagal-Arroyo, was the guest of honor at yesterday's program.

TWO MEMBERS of the 296th US Army band rehearse before the start of yesterday's rites marking the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Pangatian concentration camp. Behind them is the memorial wall bearing the names of the POWs who died at the camp. RAFFY LERMA

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, January 31, 2005
4th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Heb 11:32-40
Gospel: Mark 5:1-20

Jesus and his disciples arrived on the other side of the lake in the region of the Gerasenes. No sooner did Jesus leave the boat than he was met by a man with evil spirits who had come from the tombs. He lived among the tombs and no one could restrain him, even with a chain. He had often been bound with fetters and chains but he would pull the chains apart and smash the fetters, and no one had the strength to control him. Night and day he stayed among the tombs on the hillsides, and was continually screaming and beating himself with stones.

When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell at his feet and cried with a loud voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, son of the Most High God? For God's sake I beg you, do not torment me." He said this because Jesus had commanded, "Come out of the man, evil spirit." And when Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" he replied, "Legion is my name, for we are many." And all of them kept begging Jesus not to send them out of that region.

Now, a great herd of pigs was feeding on the hillside, and the evil spirits begged him, "Send us to the pigs and let us go into them." So Jesus let them go. The evil spirits came out of the man and went into the pigs, and immediately the herd rushed down the cliff and all were drowned in the lake. The herdsmen fled and reported this in the town and in the countryside, so all the people came to see what had happened.

They came to Jesus and saw the man freed of the evil spirits sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the same man who had been possessed by the legion. They were afraid. And when those who had seen it told what had happened to the man and to the pigs, the people begged Jesus to leave their neighborhood.

When Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed begged to stay with him. Jesus would not let him and said, "Go home to your people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you." So he went throughout the country of Decapolis telling everyone how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were astonished.

Commentary

A man who lived among the tombs, needing to be restrained, more dead than alive whose identity is legion. They recognize Jesus' power and holiness and plead not to be destroyed. Jesus demands that they come out of the man and they flee from his Word into a herd of pigs that then rush headlong over a cliff, drowning in the lake below. The man is subdued and sitting in the presence of Jesus and all who see and hear are afraid and want Jesus to leave. And the man, wanting to stay is sent home to preach the Good News done for him and show forth the glory of God.

This is Mark's gospel and the legion is Rome. Jesus' holiness and power, his presence will demand that all that makes people live in chains, more dead than alive and without hope, leave! Evil cannot stand and is overpowered by Jesus' truth and authority. The choice is to be freed or to live inhumanly. There will be reactions of fear, but those freed are sent to release others by their lives converted, and made whole by Jesus' presence in the world.

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REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Ordinary appeal process—Petitioner should have availed of the ordinary appeal process such as a petition for review under Rule 45, within 15 days after notice of denial of his Motion for Reconsideration. A Petition for Certiorari cannot be a substitute for the lost or lapsed remedy of appeal, where such loss is occasioned by the petitioner's own neglect or error in the choice of remedies. This petition must still be dismissed as the appellate court did not commit any grave abuse of discretion amounting to want or excess of jurisdiction in dismissing the petition for late payment of filing fees. Petitioner undeniably paid his docket fees beyond the reglementary period of 60 days for filing a petition for certiorari. Well settled is the rule that the court cannot acquire jurisdiction over the subject matter of a case, unless the docket fees are paid. And where the filing of the initiatory pleading is not accompanied by payment of the docket fees, the court may allow payment of the fee within a reasonable time but in no case beyond the applicable prescriptive or reglementary period. [Citations omitted.] [Resolution, Justice Quisumbing, First Division, Mercado vs Court of Appeals, G. R. No. 150241, November 4, 2004] BY R. B. Vera

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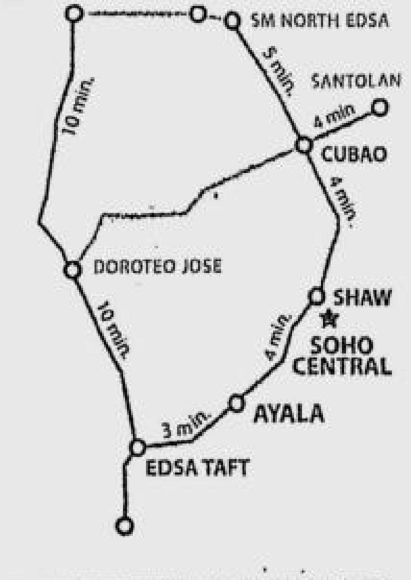

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Int'l group slams government on media slays

From page A1

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Chilling effect

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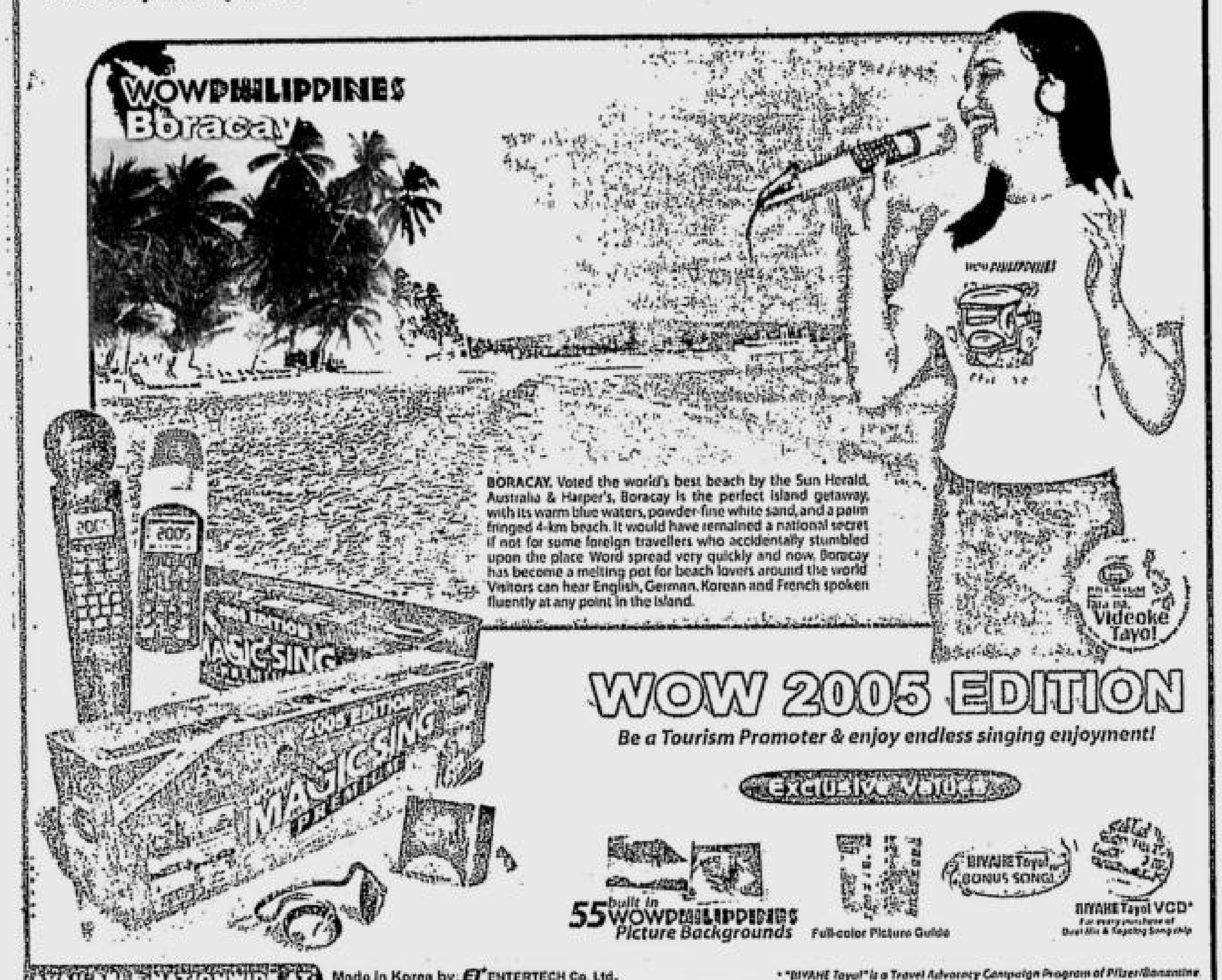
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Singapore treating OFWs better

PREVIOUSLY known for its maltreatment of foreign maids, the city-state of Singapore is turning out to be a favorable destination for overseas Filipino workers seeking to lift their families out of poverty at home.

The Department of Labor and Employment yesterday cited Singapore for implementing new measures to protect foreign workers from abusive employers.

Labor Undersecretary Manuel Imson said Singapore, one of the top 10 employers of OFWs, recently created a Foreign Manpower Division to ensure the welfare of legally employed foreigners.

The FMD, which is under the Ministry of Manpower, is tasked to protect foreign workers, improve professionalism among employment agencies and strengthen employment enforcement by conducting spot checks on employers of foreigners.

"The MOM has put in place remedial measures to look into and respond to complaints of non-payment of salaries of foreign workers. Such measures will encourage employers to give the proper pay to their foreign workers and to pay them on time," Imson said in a statement. *Blanche S. Rivera*

RP protests shackling of seamen in US

By TJ Burgonio

THE GOVERNMENT has protested the "severe treatment" of 13 Filipino seamen who had agreed to testify against their superior officers who have been charged with violating United States and international environmental laws in California.

The Filipinos, all crewmen of the MV Katerina, were shackled by American government agents when they were brought to the US district courthouse in Los Angeles from their hotel on Nov. 23 last year, the Department of Foreign Affairs said.

The court had summoned the Filipinos as material witnesses in the cases lodged against ship captain Ioannis Kallikis, chief engineer Edgardo Guinto and officer Rolan Sullesta, the DFA said in a statement.

Shortly after, the Philippine Embassy in Washington D.C. filed a formal note with the US Department of State to bring to its attention the "poor treatment" of the seafarers.

"The Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines ... protests the unnecessarily severe treatment of the 13 Filipino crew members of the MV Karenina who were restrained with shackles and leg irons," it said in the diplomatic note.

The consul general in Los Angeles also sent a separate communication to the US Attorney General's Office, saying the Filipinos should be treated humanely since they "were obviously cooperating with the US government" to prosecute the case.

Quoting the assistant US attorney prosecuting the case, the embassy said the Filipinos "were cooperative."

The MV Katerina docked at the port of Long Beach on Sept. 11, 2004. A few days later, it was detained by the US Coast Guard after inspection showed the crew had discharged oil-contaminated wastes into the ocean and falsified pollution prevention records.

On Sept. 20, the US Attorney's Office lodged criminal charges against the ship's three officers. US prosecutors charged the officers had ordered the crew to dump the oil waste and sewage overboard, and to lie about it if questioned by the Coast Guard.

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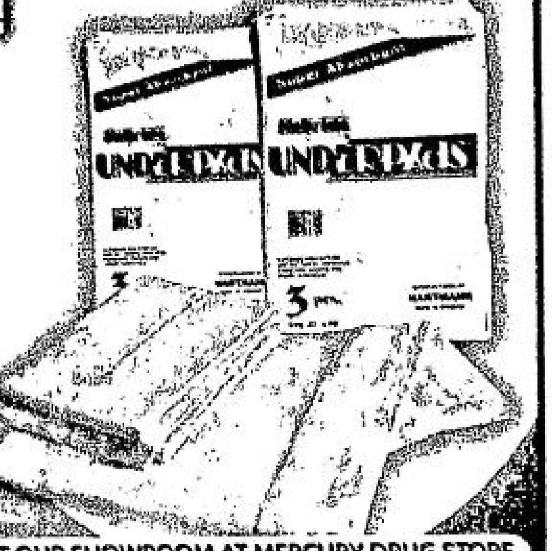

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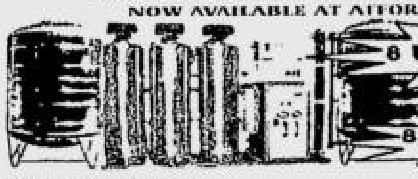

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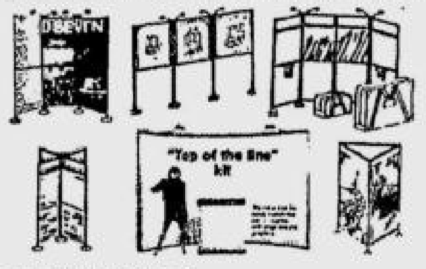

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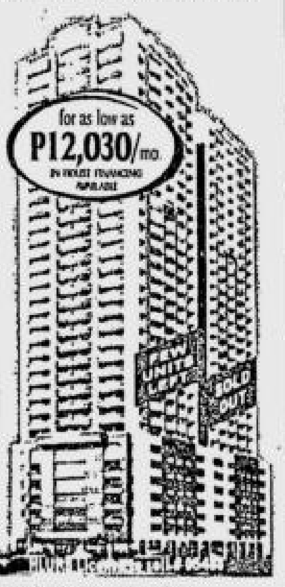

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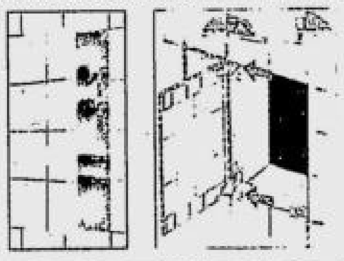

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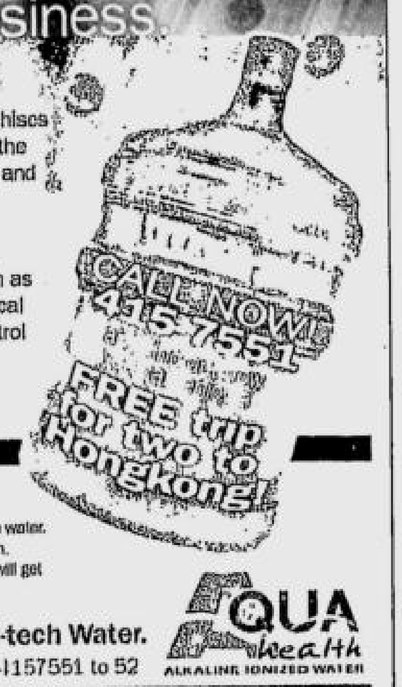

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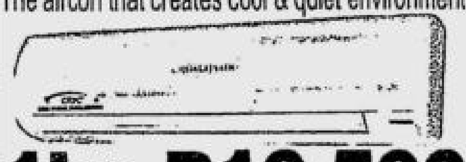

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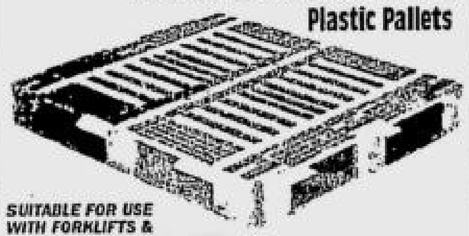

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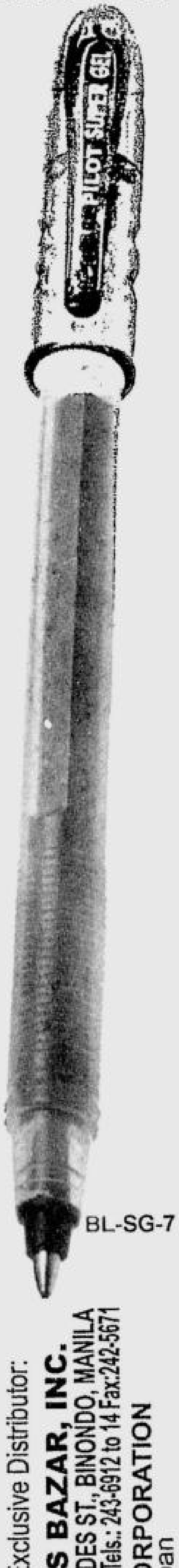

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Donors neglecting Maldives, UN warns

COLOMBO—One in three people in the low-lying Maldive islands were hit by the tsunami disaster but international donors are largely overlooking its plight, the United Nations warned Sunday.

Not a cent has been received for shelter in the tiny Indian Ocean archipelago where the tsunamis destroyed infrastructure built over 20 years and hit 70 percent of the economy, the UN said.

The UN this month issued an urgent appeal for $65 million when Secretary General Kofi Annan witnessed first-hand the destruction, but donors have been slow in digging into their pockets.

Annan said the UN did not want simply to reconstruct infrastructure but improve on it.

However, there is no money even for the most basic needs, according to the UN and government officials in the Maldives.

"We have pledges of about $27 million but not a single cent has been received for shelter," UN resident representative in the Maldives, Moez Doraid, told AFP in a telephone interview.

He said 15,000 people were still displaced after the waves submerged almost the entire country of 1,192 tiny coral islands, of which 199 are inhabited.

At least 10 percent of the islands in the Maldives were made uninhabitable after the worst natural disaster to hit the nation, 99 percent of whose territory is sea.

"The coverage of the tsunami impact on the Maldives has faded away from television screens and front pages," Doraid said. "The extensive devastation of the Maldives has not reached donor countries or the international community."

Doraid said the deaths in the Maldives—82 killed and 26 missing—were smaller in comparison to other Asian nations but in terms of destruction of livelihoods, the country had taken a big hit.

"The number of people killed is high in proportionate terms to the population," he said. "But, even in absolute terms the number of people affected is high at 100,000 or one third of the entire population."

He said most of the pledges received so far were for education in the Maldives, with the UN children's fund Unicef getting $19 million to reopen schools.

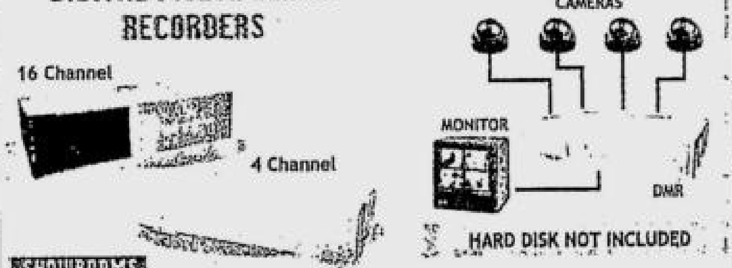
The World Health Organization has received $3.5 million for the health sector while Japan contributed $4 million and Germany $1.3 million for disaster relief.

Doraid said a program to get the displaced back to work was hugely under-funded and unless people were helped to return to their normal lives the dependency on relief aid would also be greater.

"In some cases all we need to do is get the boats and people can go back to fishing," he said. "If we get the kitchens repaired, then people can start cooking and leave relief centers."

President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom told AFP in an interview last week that the Maldives, despite being South Asia's most prosperous nation, could not rebuild on its own. *AFP*

DELAYED by tsunami—Acehnese couple Sukmadi (left), 36, and his bride Lidya Nurhayati, 25, feed each other during a wedding ceremony in the tsunami-devastated city of Banda Aceh on the Indonesian island of Sumatra Jan. 30. The marriage was the first wedding celebration in the city since last Dec. 26 when the Indian Ocean tsunami changed their original wedding plans. REUTERS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Experts carefully watching bird flu evolution

HANOI—Bird flu cases in Vietnam have grown since December at around the same rate as last year but scientists are carefully watching for any change in the way the virus is spreading.

A report by Thai and US researchers published last week suggested that human to human transmission of the virus had likely occurred and experts are on the lookout for the virus mutating—which they warn could lead to a global epidemic.

Official Vietnamese figures—the only available data but considered by scientists as unreliable—show the disease has affected slightly fewer provinces this time compared to previous outbreaks.

By Jan. 30 last year, 34 out of Vietnam's 64 provinces and cities had been declared affected, against 30 at present.

But the number of chickens ravaged by the disease or slaughtered as a preventive measure has fallen steeply, from more than 4.75 million killed in January 2004 to almost 900,000 this year.

Health officials seem to have modified their strategy this year. In 2004, they followed some foreign experts' advice to order systematic slaughtering in an area of 3 kilometers radius around a contaminated farm.

"Everyone realized that this was not really solving the problem," said Patrice Gautier, head of the Veterinarians Without Borders (VSF) organization in Vietnam.

Transmission among chickens takes place mostly during transport, mainly by foot or motorcycles, Gautier said, noting it was important to identify risk zones by tracing the trajectory a virus has followed in the three weeks prior to its identification.

"If on a Monday a farm is affected and the previous Saturday the farmer had sold his chickens to his cousin 50 km away, then all the chickens in the cousin's farm too should be slaughtered," he said. "That's much more effective than blindly killing all chickens in a 3-km radius."

The bird flu has however claimed a few more lives this year in Vietnam—11 as of Sunday, as opposed to eight last year.

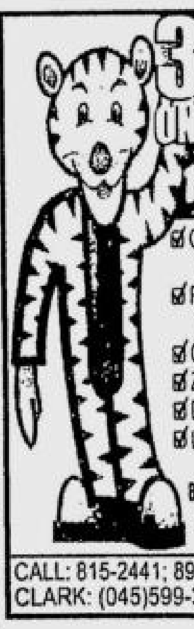
Hans Troedsson, the World Health Organization representative in Vietnam, said: "The outbreak in humans is so far very similar" to that of last year.

But scientists are watching out for two possible scenarios, he noted.

"We are worried about a possible escalation of the human cases with the virus remaining in its current form," Troedsson said. "It would not be a global threat but would be a massive challenge for the health system here."

The other worry, expressed dramatically last year at scores of health conferences, is of the virus mutating into a highly contagious one and passing from one human to another, with the potential of killing millions.

"Another concern would be any indication that the virus changed, even if there is no major rise in the number of cases. That would be much more worrying," Troedsson said. *AFP*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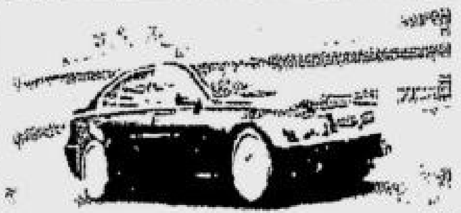
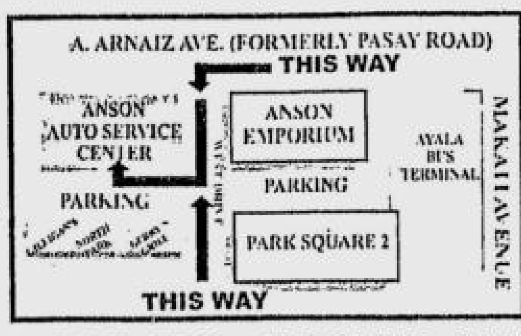

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Israel to pull out from West Bank towns within days

JERUSALEM—Israel said Sunday it was ready to hand over control of several West Bank towns to the Palestinians within days, further fueling optimism of a genuine breakthrough in the Middle East peace process.

The announcement came ahead of a breakthrough summit between Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and new Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas which Israel's public radio said had been lined up for Feb. 8.

"The transfer of control of some towns in the West Bank should take place in the next few days," Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz told Israeli radio after meeting with former Palestinian Security Minister Mohammad Dahlan on the issue.

"We are finalizing the details on the choice of towns and an exact date for their transfer," he added.

Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qorei, whose bureau chief was also present at the talks, described the meeting as "very positive" and said that the talks had also focused on the lifting of roadblocks in the West Bank.

The towns involved in the transfer agreement are said to be Ramallah, Qalqiliya, Tulkarem, Jericho and possibly Bethlehem in the south.

The transfer of control in Ramallah would be of a major symbolic importance, as it now serves as the political capital of the Palestinian Authority.

Israel's willingness to hand over control in important swathes of the occupied West Bank comes after more than 4,000 Palestinian security forces took up positions across the Gaza Strip with orders to prevent rocket attacks by militant groups.

Abbas has already secured an unofficial agreement with armed factions such as Hamas for a "cooling down" period but wants Israel to reciprocate by ending its military operations in the occupied territories and starting to release Palestinian security prisoners.

Israel's official position is that any truce is an internal Palestinian issue but is clearly moving toward meeting some of Abbas's demands.

In the last few days, officials have ordered an end to offensive operations in Gaza and a severe curtailment of lethal operations against militants as well as making positive noises about releasing significant numbers of prisoners. *AFP*

$4.8M FOR SOURPUSS

The bust "Ill Humored Man" by Franz Xaver Messerschmidt, shown here, was bought by the Louvre Museum for $4,832,000 at an auction at Sotheby's in New York on Jan. 27. The price was almost 10 times the expected sale price. REUTERS

China nabs dissidents mourning Zhao death

BEIJING—China has detained several dissidents who had traveled to Beijing to mourn the death of deposed leader Zhao Ziyang, a rights group said Sunday.

The government intensified security to prevent mourners from attending Saturday's funeral in Beijing for Zhao, the former premier and Communist Party chief purged for opposing the 1989 military crackdown on the Tiananmen democracy movement.

Dissidents Zhang Lin and Wang Tingjin from the eastern province of Anhui traveled to Beijing on Thursday. But their request to attend the funeral was rejected by the funeral committee set up by the communist party, said the Hong Kong-based Information Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

The rights group said they were arrested as they arrived back at the train station in their home city of Bangfu on Saturday.

Wang was released after being detained for five hours but Zhang was told he would be detained for 15 days, the group said in a statement.

Zhang, 42, who had previously been jailed for eight years for taking part in pro-democracy activities, was warned that he would be "punished harshly" if he did not maintain good behavior, the group said.

A duty officer at Bangfu police station said no one was available to comment.

Another dissident, Ma Shaofang, who was imprisoned for three years for taking part in the 1989 Tiananmen movement, traveled to Beijing from Shenzhen last week but has been missing since Thursday, a friend and the rights group said.

Phone calls by AFP to his mobile phone Sunday got a message saying it was switched off.

Beijing police said Sunday they had not heard of Ma and a unit responsible for missing people said it had not received reports about him. *AFP*

2/3 of Iraqis killed in 6 months died in military operations, says report

LONDON—Nearly two-thirds of people killed in Iraq in the past six months died in "military operations," the BBC will say in a report on Sunday which has been contested by the Iraqi interim government.

The British broadcaster, in its "Panorama" television show, will cite figures it said were from the Iraqi health ministry for casualties from July 1 to Jan. 1, the BBC said in a statement.

Of 3,274 people killed in Iraq during that time, 2,041 were stated to be the result of "military operations," while 1,233 deaths were the result of "terrorist operations," according to figures from the ministry obtained by the BBC.

A total of 8,542 people were also listed as injured in the combined operations.

The BBC initially said that casualties from "military operations" meant deaths resulting from US-led and Iraqi security force actions.

But the health ministry contested the report, and issued a statement on Saturday rejecting the program's conclusions.

"Those recorded as killed in 'military action' included Iraqis killed by terrorists, not only those killed by coalition forces or Iraqi security forces," the statement read.

It also said the casualty figures "included terrorists themselves and Iraqi security forces."

The ministry's protest prompted an apology from the BBC, but the broadcaster said it would still run its "Panorama" program as scheduled.

"The BBC regrets mistakes in its published and broadcast reports," it said in a statement, referring to a press release about the casualty figures released on Friday.

The respected British medical weekly The Lancet in October published an article in which made a "conservative" estimate that 100,000 Iraqi civilians had died as a result of the March 2003 US-led invasion, more than half of them from violence. *AFP*

100-YEAR-OLD Swedish twins Gunhild Gaellstedt (left) and Siri Ingvarsson carry flowers and a cake as they hold their long lives' press conference in their home in Stockholm, Jan. 28. The two are the oldest twins in Sweden that counts to 86,000 couples. The two manage their daily life without a permanent assistance. AFP

Sweden's oldest twins say turning 100 years 'isn't that big of a deal'

By Mattias Karen

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—They have lived for 200 years between them, but Sweden's oldest pair of twins had never seen anything like this before.

Holding up a birthday cake and two bouquets of flowers, Siri Ingvarsson and Gunhild Gaellstedt seemed bewildered by the number of photographers huddled around them in the living room of Gaellstedt's Stockholm apartment earlier this week.

"Why do they need five photographers?" Gaellstedt asked. "Do they not think we'll stick on the film?"

The media attention seemed hard to understand for the sisters—after all, Ingvarsson said, the fact that they turn 100 on Sunday "isn't that big of a deal."

"Not much different from turning 99," she said.

Still, Ingvarsson and Gaellstedt—who both walk without any assistance and do all their daily chores themselves—did their best to answer some of the questions they've almost grown tired of by now. No, they repeated time and again, they do not really have a secret formula for long life.

"We like to joke and say it's because we lived only on turnip back in 1914," Gaellstedt said. "That's all we had to eat during the world war. The first one, that is."

They have a more normal diet now, they said, but that hasn't stopped them from keeping their health. Aside from when they gave birth—they each had one child—Gaellstedt is the only one who has ever been hospitalized. She broke her thigh bone two years ago, but recovered quickly, she said.

Ingvarsson, who is 30 minutes older than her sister, said she has never been seriously injured or ill.

"I have a toe that aches, though," she said.

But in a country where senior citizens have access to free home-help service, the sisters do their shopping, cleaning, cooking and laundry themselves. They have both lived in the same apartment building for more than 50 years, Ingvarsson on the second floor and Gaellstedt on the third. The building has no elevator, but neither sister has any trouble getting up and down the stairs every day.

Ingvarsson's son, Stig, said the sisters' active lifestyle is probably why they've aged so well.

"They're on the go all the time," he said. "And they get natural exercise from walking up the stairs."

Stig Ingvarsson, a 62-year-old clockmaker who has lived in Boston, Massachusetts, since 1969, said Sunday's birthday party will be small, with only the closest family. While Gaellstedt's daughter is also still alive, other friends and loved ones died long ago.

Stig said he doubted he'll match his mother's feat.

"I already feel like I'm 100," he said.

Sweden, a country of 9 million, has more than 86,000 pairs of twins, but Ingvarsson and Gaellstedt are "by far" the oldest, said Nancy Pedersen, a professor who researches twins at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm. The institute keeps a national record of all Sweden's twins.

"It's very, very unusual that two twins both live to be 100," Pedersen said.

The oldest female twins in the world were Kin Narita and Gin Kanie of Japan. Both sisters died in 2000 at the age of 107, according to Guinness World Records.

The Swedish sisters said they're not aiming to beat that record. They haven't made any plans for their 101st birthday yet, they said.

"We don't know if we'll still be alive then," Gaellstedt said. "We may fall down dead tomorrow." *AP*

THEY SHOULD LIVE TO BE A HUNDRED
Twins Judith (left) and Edith Schwitalla, both "Miss Western Germany," pose during a news conference ahead of the "Miss Germany" elections in the southwestern German village of Rust Jan. 25. Judith and Edith will participate in the Jan. 29 event as one competitor. REUTERS

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Turning point?

EDITORIAL

REGARDLESS of what will finally happen in the polling centers of Iraq, US President George W. Bush will declare a victory in the precincts of Washington. That is what troubles us the most about the elections for the Iraqi national assembly, which were held yesterday but whose official results won't be known for a couple of weeks. Regardless of the evidence, Bush will declare that, yes, democracy is truly on the march.

If only it were that simple.

As a people still recovering from the sometimes-unacknowledged effects of martial rule, Filipinos can only look at the Iraqi elections with the deepest sympathy. We wish the vote would be orderly, peaceful and popular. We hope that the vote will lead in quick succession to the formation of a new government with a true mandate, the drafting of a modern, post-Saddam Hussein constitution, and the bloodless conduct of a referendum to ratify it. We pray that the vote would prove to be a true turning point in the Iraqi journey to democracy.

But the reality is much more complicated, and violent, than what we would like to believe.

The political crisis in Iraq is, in truth, a civil war. Under the best of circumstances, a first election (as in East Timor or Cambodia) is a difficult achievement. But hastily conducted in a country that is spinning out of anyone's control, an election does not only put the lives of candidates and voters at stake; it actually undermines the very ideal of democracy.

(As the Economist notes, the names of most of the 7,000 candidates for the 275 seats at stake in Iraq were kept secret "until the last minute, for fear of making them an assassination target." Why? Insurgents had declared a "holy war" on the entire electoral process.)

It is possible to hold credible elections even in the middle of a civil war; robust democracies have given proof of that. The United States famously reelected Abraham Lincoln while the American Civil War raged. But a fledgling democracy?

The decision to push through with the elections regardless of the deterioration in the security situation, however, was not made by the government of interim prime minister Iyad Allawi. It was the call of a White House desperate for a face-saving way out.

Bush announced only last week that US forces will stay in Iraq as long as the new government needs them, but already we can sense a shift in his administration's priorities. True, he has asked the US Congress for an additional $80 billion for the upkeep of US forces in Iraq (increased to 150,000 troops in the run-up to the elections). But the supplementary budget is short-term. The Bush administration now has a new focus for the medium-term: Iran.

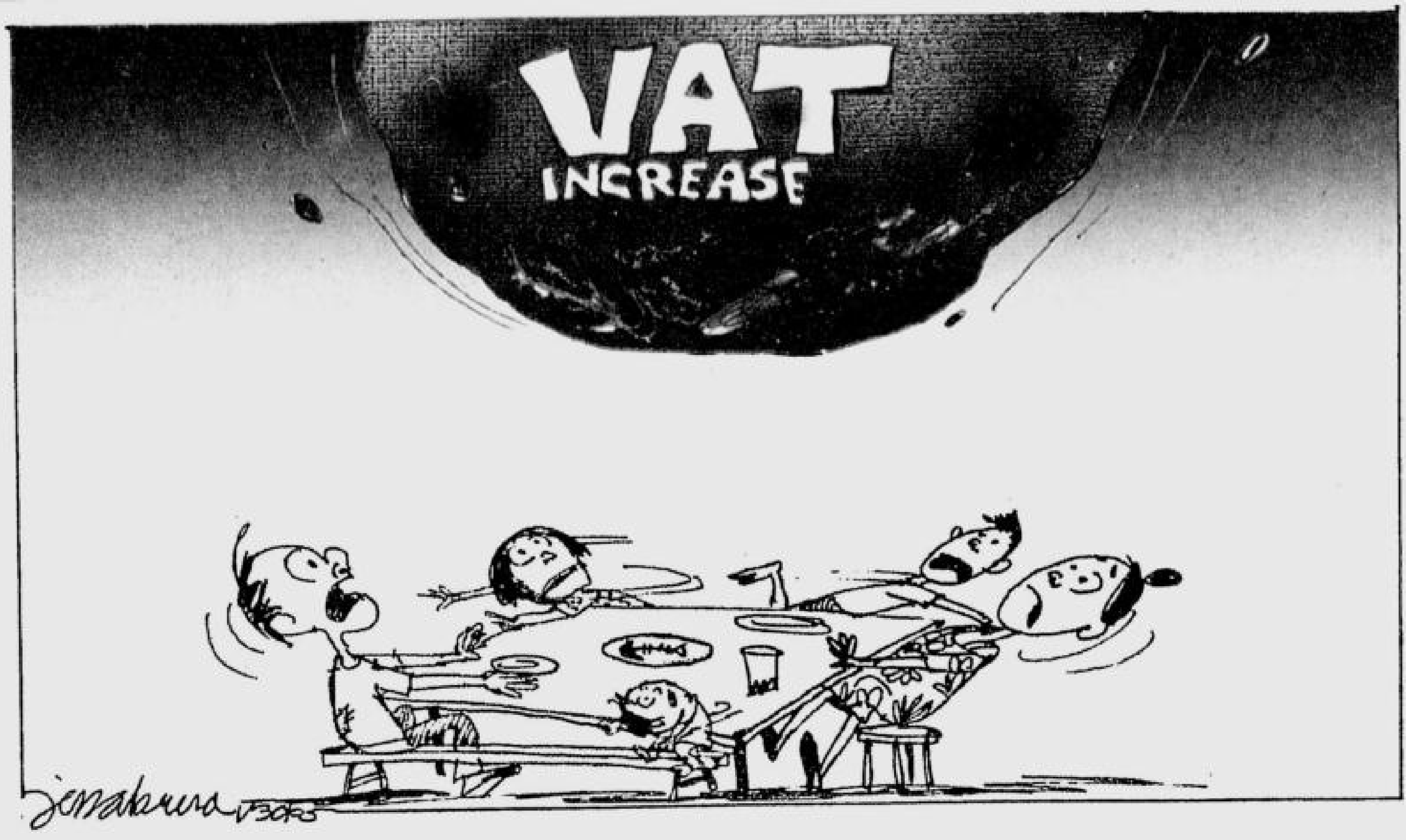
We have seen this peculiar, fire-and-forget approach to democracy-building before, under the same Bush administration. The year after invading Afghanistan in 2001 and toppling the Taliban regime, the administration failed to include a single dollar for Afghan rehabilitation in its proposed budget. By then, of course, the cowboys in the White House were rounding up a posse against Iraq.

Extrication from the Iraqi quagmire has proven more difficult, but the elections and the prospect of a new government will give the White House the perfect excuse.

Are we contradicting ourselves? We had joined the international chorus of condemnation against the unilateral American military action in Iraq. Shouldn't we support both the election, as a milestone in democracy, and the eventual pullout of US troops, as an index of self-determination?

We support a democratic, unoccupied Iraq. If the Americans had made sure that the legislative elections would take place in security and enjoy the support of a majority, we would have sung Washington's praises. But the US occupation of Iraq had a fatal flaw: The United States was not prepared to administer the country. The results include a country wracked by violence, with no real center of control, and an election struggling for legitimacy.

By rushing the vote, the White House will be able to claim a short-term victory. But the danger of a rushed election may very well be long-term: the erosion of the Iraqi people's confidence in democracy.



More betrayals in GMA administration

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

ILOCOS SUR Gov. Chavit Singson was hopping mad last Saturday after he read a story in one newspaper that President Macapagal-Arroyo had reached a deal with former President Estrada to stop the latter from attacking her administration. The deal was allegedly for GMA to drop Singson in exchange for Erap going slow in his attacks on GMA and her policies. The story said it was Presidential Chief of Staff Norberto Gonzales who struck the arrangement during a one-hour talk with Erap at the latter's rest house in Tanay, Rizal.

True or false? Singson suspects it is true because a day after Gonzales' visit, GMA issued a statement that she plans a change in the Poro Point Management Corp. (PPMC), the agency implementing projects in the La Union port. Singson's former employees—Carmelita Itchon and Emma Lim—are members of the PPMC board. The two had testified against Erap. A relative of Singson, Filodelfo Roxas, heads the PPMC.

At the time GMA made the statement, Erap announced the formation of a citizen's committee that, he said, would help solve the country's economic problems.

The next day, Malacañang said, "The President welcomed the opposition's move not to destabilize her administration and its offer to help."

If you were Singson, what would you think? No wonder he was very angry. This is ingratitude and a betrayal of the worst kind, he said. It is all right to woo your enemies, he added, but not at the expense of your allies.

Circumstantial evidence really points that way, but let's wait for what Malacañang has to say and for further developments.

I hope it is not true; but if it is, it just proves GMA is true to her character: she cannot be trusted. It is just the latest chapter in a career full of betrayals and false promises.

* * *

The increase in the Value Added Tax is one more such betrayal of the people. The increase will hit the poor where it hurts most: in their pockets and their stomachs.

Malacañang's statement that basic commodities will be exempted from the increase is a lie. There is no provision in the bill passed by the House exempting basic goods from the VAT. Congressmen said the exemption would be passed later or inserted by the Senate-House bicameral conference committee.

But what happens if the exemption is not passed? As the saying goes, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. This is not the first time that a bill with good intentions is lost in the wheeling and dealing in Congress. It would be just one more betrayal, nothing new in the Arroyo administration.

The increase in many government fees, the increase in power and water rates, the continuing rise in the prices of fuel and medicine are more betrayals. Maybe the administration cannot stop the rise in power and fuel prices, but it certainly could have stopped the increase in government fees out of consideration for the people already being squeezed dry. The fact that many government agencies rushed to increase fees means they had the tacit consent of the President. To paraphrase Hamlet: Betrayer, thy name is woman.

* * *

What's happening to our policemen? After a policeman ran amuck and killed six persons in Aklan, another policeman shot in the head, in cold blood, a helpless and defenseless dog. In the premises of the Senate, *pa*. The latter policeman is no ordinary cop. He is a member of the elite Special Action Force (SAF), whose members are carefully selected and specially trained. That is why they were the ones chosen to secure the Senate.

So what happened to this particular cop that he cold-bloodedly shot the dog "Butchoy" in the head? His excuse was that his unit had orders to keep dogs away from the Senate premises (if it was the House, I would say it is because crocodiles hate dogs). But surely, the senators didn't order them to shoot dogs, did they?

Many people were angered by the merciless shooting of Butchoy, a pet of the employees of the Senate motor pool. Fortunately, the dog did not die, though the .22-caliber bullet is still lodged in its head. It may still die. It is now frail and sickly.

The Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) (bless its soul) has offered to nurse Butchoy back to health and adopt it. But even if the dog survives, the future is not so bright for it. In the future, it may have epileptic fits, or worse than that. No animal harbors a bullet in its brain and remains normal.

The strange thing is why our distinguished senators and the officers of the Philippine National Police are unusually quiet. Not even a slap on the wrist of the erring cop. It is said that the Senate SAF members had earlier shot another dog and ate its meat as *pulutan* in a drinking spree. Obviously, they liked the taste of *asocena* and so they tried to make out of Butchoy another *asocena*.

A law, the Animal Welfare Act (AWA), penalizes the killing, butchering, selling and eating of dog meat. The duty of policemen is to enforce laws and arrest those who violate it. The day after Butchoy's sad tale came out in the media, the police arrested several persons in Tondo for butchering dogs and selling their meat. What about the policeman who shot Butchoy?

I hope the Senate and PNP leadership punish the erring cop to show the rest of the population that—in the words of Sen. Alfredo Lim—"the law applies to all, or not at all."

Today, a dog was shot in cold blood by a cop; tomorrow, it could be a person.

What's education for?

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

GILL Westaway, British Council executive director, had an interesting thing to say last week. The Philippines, he said, could be suffering from too many colleges and universities. "There could be an oversupply in some areas. In a country like the Philippines, where resources are scarce, it's better to have fewer universities with quality rather than allowing hundreds of universities that are diluting the overall quality." Westaway based his remarks on a one-year study made by the British Council with funding from the Asian Development Bank.

Well, if the point of education is merely to enable students to find jobs, then I agree with this wholeheartedly. A college or university education in this country is superfluous, even counterproductive. It is four or five years' waste of time and effort. A couple of months from now, thousands of college graduates will line up before their school officials to get their diplomas, and we will hear again, in editorials and various commentaries, about how so few of those hopeful faces will turn radiant in the next few years. Most of them will end up glum from unemployment. There are simply no jobs available for most of those commerce, accounting and communication graduates.

If the point is landing a job abroad, then the four or five years spent in colleges and universities are just as well a waste of time and effort. You won't be working as a doctor, lawyer, or media person in other countries anyway. They won't take you in those capacities simply because you have a degree in medicine, law, or communication from a Philippine university. Your employers are not entirely to blame, to go by the Newsweek ranking of colleges and universities some years ago, where Ateneo, UP and La Salle landed among the lower rungs of the ladder, a far cry from 30 years before when they were among the top 20 in Asia. You have a degree in medicine, law and communication from a Philippine university, you will work as a caregiver, a bank teller, or a fast-food attendant anyway.

If the point of education is to merely give students employment, here or abroad, we would be better off scrapping colleges and universities and putting up nursing and trade schools and schools that teach survival English across the country. Many colleges and universities are already doing it, opening up nursing departments in response to the demand for caregivers in the United States, Canada and elsewhere. And teaching functional English so the nurses and maids can communicate with their employers. I am not being entirely facetious when I say maybe we should also put up pop music schools. That's our main export to Asia—musicians and bands.

But if the point of education is more than just employing people, then the problem becomes a lot more complex, one that isn't solved simply by lessening the number of colleges or universities. The problem precisely lies in the fact that our whole educational system is now predicated on enabling students to find work. That is as narrow and unenlightened a view of education as you can get. The point of education is not just to enable students to work, it is to enable students to think. The point of education is not just to impart skills, it is to impart vision. The point of education is not just to prepare the youth to face the "outside world." The point of education is to educate.

I grant giving students the skills to find jobs is important as well, particularly for a country like ours. I found nothing short of heroic the efforts of my mechanic some years ago to see his son through dentistry and his daughter through nursing school. At the end of the day, he would pull himself up from underneath the car he had been fixing, grimy and sweaty, to greet his kids when they came home from school in their smart all-white uniforms. People like him have every right to expect his children's schools to give them a crack at a more secure future.

But that isn't all that schools can, or should, do. Certainly, that isn't all that colleges and universities can, or should, do. The business of colleges and universities is to bequeath to the world a generation that can think, that can aspire to know the what and the why and not just the how and the how-how-the-carabao. I remember again the irate letter-writer who demanded to know what I had against caregivers and maids—I had asked what we were doing turning ourselves into the toilet-bowl cleaners of the world—when both did completely respectable work. My answer then, and now, is that I have nothing against them, just as I have nothing against janitors and forklift operators. What I have against is the attitude that we can only exist in survival mode and that we can't be better. What I have against is an educational system that imagines its role in life to be to cater to the export labor market by producing standard entrants to it.

I remember again too the non-joke about Pinoy and Chinoy college graduates. When Pinoy graduates meet, they ask each other, "What job have you landed?" When Chinoy graduates meet, they ask each other, "What business have you opened?" We can say the same thing about the graduates of our colleges and universities and those of other Asian countries. When they meet, our graduates ask each other, "Which country do you want to go to?" When the graduates of other Asian colleges and universities meet, they ask each other, "Where do we want our country to go?" The first is called resignation, the second is called ambition. The first is called desperation, the second is called direction. The first is called getting by, the second is called getting ahead.

We just want the first, let's not bother reducing our colleges and universities. Let's scrap them altogether.

The lesser evil

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE LEFTISTS in the House of Representatives, specifically party-list members like Liza Maza, are now complaining that the House was not able to hear the side of the poor in the VAT-increase issue. But Maza and the other sectoral congressmen, who are supposed to represent the marginalized sectors, are members of the House's ways and means committee. Where were they during its deliberations on the VAT increase? What were they doing?

* * *

By now, it's evident that the leftist members of the House are intent on pursuing their agenda against any legislation that will alleviate the government's fiscal problem or the nation's poverty. It's evident to many observers that they merely want to foment anarchy and see the government fall.

What about the members of the opposition in Congress? Can't they see beyond their agenda of just opposing the administration for the sake of opposing so that they can bring down the administration and get themselves back to power? The irony is that their champion, former President Estrada, whose heart is supposed to be bleeding for the poor, shocked Hong Kong with his wanton display of wealth there last month.

What about the members of the majority, such as Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan and finance committee chair Manuel Villar? Why are they opposing the VAT increase when its purpose has been amply discussed in the recent Ledac meeting? As a longtime businessman, Villar knows how crucial a solid financial statement is to recovery. What about Sen. Joker Arroyo? He says he has been opposed to the VAT since 1997, but can't he see that times now warrant it?

* * *

We all have our own issues against the administration, but in this issue of the VAT increase, the choice—to quote economics professor Solita Monsod—is pretty plain: It's between imposing a two-percentage point VAT increase that could possibly affect even the poorer sectors in terms of higher prices, or bringing the economy to the brink of collapse. It's clearly a choice between the lesser of two evils, and the latter is worse as this would definitely affect the delivery of basic services to the poor. As always we quarrel about who's causing the malady when the more important thing in an emergency is to treat the patient first.

* * *

To my mind, the paramount consideration is not how to avoid a VAT increase, but to mitigate its effects on the poor through safety nets. In this connection, the recent approval by the House of the rent control bill has to be viewed as one such safety net. This bill seeks to freeze for three years rent increases for dwelling units renting below P7,000 a month; thus it assures the middle and lower classes a temporary solution to a major headache.

Speaking of the middle class, it should be the first to push for the VAT increase, as an economic collapse—if revenue goals are not met—would hit it first and foremost, not the rich.

* * *

The prospect of a worsening fiscal crisis affecting the delivery of basic services is nowhere better illustrated than in education. Last night Cecile Alvarez and I had as guest (in our regular Sunday dzRH poverty-alleviation program) Education Secretary Florencio Abad, who spoke about the "crisis in RP education." The details he gave should shake our legislators in their Bally shoes so they'd move to prevent a real fiscal crisis. Read these, honorable legislators, and tell us if a 15-cents increase in the selling price of a can of sardines or noodles is worse.

In a recent survey of 45 countries on high school competencies, RP placed 41st, beating only South Africa, Ghana, Botswana and Saudi Arabia. On the elementary level, out of 25 countries, RP placed 23rd, beating only Tunisia and Morocco. In the 2003 survey involving second-year high schoolers in 38 countries on "Trends in International Mathematics and Science," (conducted by Boston College and released last December 2004), RP placed 36th. Guess who were the top five? Our neighbors: Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea and Japan (which tied with the United Kingdom).

What are our legislators going to do about RP being the laggard in the region? Surely they know that reforms need plenty of funding.

* * *

The results of the 2004 High School Readiness Test were quite publicized during former Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus' time: only 0.64 percent of the public elementary students scored 75 percent or better, meaning that only 8,000 students out of 1.2 million examinees passed. Abad revealed that despite free and compulsory elementary education here, only 87, out of every 100 children qualified for the elementary, get to enroll in that level; of the 87 students, only 67 percent are able to graduate from elementary, while only one-half of the 67 percent graduate from high school. On the other hand, in the "self-assessment test for English," only 19 percent of our teachers scored 75 percent or better, which means that no more than 10,000 out of around 51,000 teachers passed the test. Our 17 million public elementary and high school students are packed into about 41,734 public elementary and high schools, but the DepEd is still short by 57,000 classrooms.

* * *

These data only speak of physical infrastructure and not the quality of RP education, which is another sordid story. Abad noted that one reason for our poor performance in education is RP's very meager budget for education (this is where a strong economy matters so much). RP spends only $138 or P7,700 per student per year, whereas Thailand, for instance, spends about $852 per student (P47,700); contrast this to the United States' and New Zealand's allocation of about $2,240 (P125,500) per student each year.

(To be continued)

Life and death

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

IT may not be a bad omen to the political career of Vice President Noli de Castro, but the death early this month of his "adopted" namesake, Philippine eagle "Kabayan," illustrates the ironic yet grim reality when modernization and conservation clash.

Eagle Kabayan, the first eagle (in Asia) bred in captivity, met death last Jan. 8 after being electrocuted on an electric post inside the forest reserve of the Mt. Apo Natural Park. The circumstances surrounding Kabayan's death baffled experts at the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF), which runs a breeding center located in the watershed area of Malagos in Davao City.

PEF studies showed that wild Philippine eagles wander around the forests—now "host" to a network of high-voltage transmission towers and power lines—without meeting an accident. While the two-year-old Kabayan was "captive-bred," the PEF said it was unusual for the eagle to perch on an electrical post: Kabayan was among the eagles raised in an isolated forest environment. The release of Kabayan on Earth Day, April 22, 2004 was aimed to test the survival capacity of captive-bred eagles in the wilderness. The experimental release was touted as a milestone not only in the effort to arrest the feared extinction of the country's national bird but also in the overall environmental conservation program. Ironically, Kabayan was released inside the forest reserve of the Philippine National Oil Co., which has a geothermal plant in the area.

"This is a difficult time but we remain committed to seeing Philippine eagles roam freely in the wild for generations to come. We shall keep improving our programs and experimental releases to the best of our ability, this isolated event notwithstanding. We continue to believe in the value of protecting our natural resources not just for preservation's sake, but for the sake of all who rely on this planet for our needs," the PEF said later in a statement.

Kabayan's death nearly overshadowed the "birthday" anniversary of eagle Pag-asa, the first Philippine eagle conceived in captivity through artificial insemination and hatched on Jan. 15, 1992. Just like Kabayan's celebrated release to the wilderness, Pag-asa's birth was touted both as a milestone and a test of how serious we are in saving our country's remaining and fast-dwindling natural resources.

Thirteen years after Pag-asa's birth, all we can see is the continuing destruction of the eagle's natural habitat.

* * *

Nowadays, many Davaoeños envy Cebu. It is not only because President Macapagal-Arroyo loves to visit the place. It is also because of the special attention she has devoted to Cebu. Following reports on the recent spate of summary, vigilante-type killings of crime suspects in the metropolis, she immediately ordered authorities to investigate and prosecute those involved. Some senators followed suit, condemning the killings as a sign of the breakdown of law and order.

But Davaoeños have yet to hear the President or senators expressing as much concern about the spate of summary executions in Davao City and other parts of Southern Mindanao which started in 2001 and has since claimed more than 200 lives. President Arroyo cannot feign ignorance about these killings. Two years ago, a group of concerned citizens and human rights advocates even requested no less than Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, to hand-carry to the President a petition for the investigation of the killings in the Davao region.

So far this year, since New Year's Day, in Davao City alone, 38 people—including women and minors—have been executed by motorcycle-riding gunmen. The media have attributed all the "hits" to the so-called Davao Death Squad (DDS). But, ranking police authorities in the region insist that there is no such vigilante group like the DDS that exists! "It's a turf war among drug syndicates," they say, apparently conditioning the minds of residents to brace for more killings to come. If they are to be believed, it means that drug syndicates thrive in Davao City, despite all the support Mayor Rodrigo Duterte has been giving the police. Not only that, it appears that these syndicates can wage with impunity their murderous "turf war" in broad daylight with the local police just watching in the sidelines to count the dead later.

Still, whether the hits are made by vigilantes or by guns-for-hire, the police authorities in Southern Mindanao should be held liable for dereliction of duty; until now not a single summary execution case has been solved. An alarmed senior lawyer in Davao commented that the only way for the killings to stop is to do an "old-fashioned police work." How can these killings be stopped if we keep on blaming the mayor while the police fail or choose not to do their jobs, he said. The police failure is probably what also exasperated Antonio Valenzuela, the deputy ombudsman for Mindanao, who is among the officials critical of the summary killings. Last week, Valenzuela formally requested National Bureau of Investigation director Reynaldo Wycoco to send to Davao a crack NBI team that will investigate the killings and, possibly, put a stop to the rampage. "We are turning into a killing field," said Valenzuela, himself a former NBI agent. He is doubtless right. And, probably it is high time, too, for Ms Arroyo to also step in. That is, if she's as concerned with Davao and the other places as she is with Cebu.

* * *

Comments to karlos_z23@hotmail.com or kar_laws@yahoo.com

Paredes' principles

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

CHANCES are you know who Jim Paredes of the Apo Hiking Society fame is. You probably also know Paulynn Paredes-Sicam, columnist for the Today newspaper; Jesse Paredes, columnist for the Times; and Ducky Paredes, columnist for the Malaya. All of them are well-known (and deservedly so) for their patriotism, professionalism and integrity. However, only a dwindling number of Filipinos still recall their ancestor, Quintin Paredes (1884-1973). He was a lawyer and a remarkable sort of man; a politician of principles—whether as member of the Cabinet, assemblyman, Philippine Resident Commissioner to Washington, or senator. In his day, he was the most famous son of Abra. Today, the majority of Filipinos may not know who he was, but his descendants continue to demonstrate the kind of independence of mind he was known for.

Quintin Paredes comes to mind because of a book I recently read—"Escape to Manila," by Frank Ephraim. The book points out an inspiring example of Filipinos speaking out against Jewish persecution.

On Nov. 9, 1938, the Nazis unleashed what came to be known as Kristallnacht, or the Night of Broken Glass, in response to the assassination of the third secretary of the German Embassy in Paris by a Jewish student. As the Simon Weisenthal Center describes the event, "Reinhard Heydrich (the head of the Reich Main Security Office which oversaw the Gestapo, police and SD operations) sent a secret telegram at 1:20 a.m., November 10, 1938 to 'all headquarters and stations of the State Police; all districts and sub-districts of the SD.' He gave instructions for the immediate coordination of police and political activities in inciting the riots throughout Germany and Austria. 'The demonstrations are not to be prevented by the police,' he ordered, rather, the police are 'only to supervise the observance of the guidelines.'

"The result of this policy was the first violent pogrom (riot) on Western European soil in hundreds of years. 36 Jews were killed (some authorities have this figure as high as 91); 30,000 more were deported to concentration camps; 267 synagogues were burned and over 7,000 Jewish shops, businesses and homes were vandalized and ransacked.

"Immediately after Kristallnacht, a fine of one billion marks was levied, not upon the criminals, but upon the victims, the Jewish community of Germany. Along with the fine came a decision, taken in a conference of Nazi leaders on November 12, 1938, to 'Aryanize the German economy, to get the Jew out....' Nazi policy had now moved into the overt destruction of all Jewish life in the Third Reich."

Worldwide, people reacted with horror and outrage to Kristallnacht, causing Hitler to order the suspension of such obvious acts of aggression against the Jews. Among the people inspired to protest against the Nazi actions was Quintin Paredes, then an assemblyman and majority floor leader, who led a public protest against the Nazi persecutions. Together with other civic leaders and with the support of a rather large crowd, he delivered speeches to the extent that the German consulate in Manila was quite irritated.

A decade before, in the 1920s, Filipino businessmen and politicians rallied around Tan Malaka, an Indonesian communist whom the Dutch colonial authorities wanted the American colonial authorities to expel from the Philippines. And decades later, of course, Filipinos from all walks of life rallied and petitioned in defense of Vietnamese refugees, as well as Burmese and Malaysian dissidents. We have a long and rather touching history of rallying in defense of oppressed peoples.

Filipinos like Quintin Paredes would later put deeds into their denunciation of Nazi persecution by welcoming Jewish refugees to the Philippines at a time when other nations had slammed their doors shut to Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria. Indeed, it became Philippine government policy—after the lobbying efforts of two Jewish brothers, the Frieders, who had commercial interests in Manila; and sympathetic American officials who didn't agree with the refusal of the United States to accept Jewish refugees—to allow the immigration of Jews into the country. The Philippines was prepared to accept 10,000 Jews a year for a certain number of years. As things turned out, with World War II about to break out in Europe, only 1,200 Jews made it to Manila.

It is the story of those Jewish refugees that Ephraim set out to tell in "Escape to Manila." It is a heartwarming story, in many respects, because of the way Filipinos, Americans, Jews and others, set out to give refuge to the Jews fleeing from the persecution in Europe. It is a story few people know about; but now that the story has been published, it is one we, Filipinos, should be familiar with. At a time when we always seem at a loss when it comes to things to be proud of in our past, this is as good an example as any.

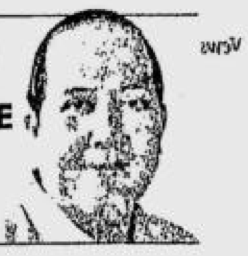
* * *

"Escape to Manila" was published by the University of Illinois Press in 2003, and launched at the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C. It's not in the bookstores here yet, but you can order it from Powerbooks or A Different Bookstore. More information on the book can be found at http://www.press.uillinois.edu/f03/ephraim.html.

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

Refreshing news



READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

AFTER A LONG spell of depressing news about natural and man-made calamities, it's nice to read about something positive, especially one involving our country's economic condition.

The peso gained in value against the US dollar last week. At one point in last Friday's transactions, the exchange rate was P55.08 to $1. The stock market reached its highest peak in a five-year period. The latest Philippine bond offering in the foreign credit market overshot its target by 500 percent.

These refreshing developments were reported in the INQUIRER's front page last Jan. 28. The banner read: "Yahoo! Peso at P55.15 - $1"; the subhead was "Investors pour dollars into RP."

Before that issue came out, a reader (who describes herself as an unpaid, self-appointed critic of the newspaper) wrote to complain about what she considered "PDI's deliberate efforts to highlight the unpleasant events in our country to the point of making me and other members of my household avoid reading your main section."

She cited three instances in the past when the depreciation of the peso in relation to the US dollar was reported in big bold letters on the front page. While she appreciates the newspaper's policy of reporting the events as they happen, she expressed concern that "by emphasizing our monetary problems, you have unduly added to the public's anxiety about the direction of the country."

In the light of the present favorable peso-dollar exchange rate and active stock market, the reader wonders "why PDI has not reported these positive developments with the same intensity it reported the plunge of the peso, the high prices of basic commodities and similar incidents that give the impression that our country is in a terrible mess."

Confirmation

The first thing I did after receiving the reader's letter was to review the newspaper's past issues to find out if, as the reader claims, it gave prominent publicity to the peso's depreciation in the past. I limited my search to 2004 although I recall that sharp peso-dollar fluctuations had been in the news for quite some time already.

She was partly correct. On two occasions last year, the decline in the peso's value was front-page news. Last Sept. 28, the banner was "All-time low: P56.45 - $1." In that report, a leading American financial services company predicted the peso's depreciation to P57.50 by March and P57.80 by September of this year.

I've noticed that between political and economic news reports, the latter often elicits more comments from the readers. It's probably because people are sick and tired of the antics of our politicians that they consider it a waste of time to read the news about them.

When the financial news could have an adverse effect on the wallet or peso's purchasing power, the reaction from the readers is swift and strong. On a number of occasions, in the course of criticizing the government or whoever is believed to be responsible for the unpleasant report, the newspaper gets a drubbing also. It's like blaming the messenger for the bad news.

As always, however, the newspaper's Sunday issues that contain "feel good" news never fail to elicit favorable response from the readers. Stories about acts of charity, sacrifice or patriotism by Filipinos are a welcome break from the spate of negative reports that seems to dominate the rest of the week.

Hesitation

I think most newspapers—except those that have already conditioned the minds of their staff to see nothing good in anything that happens in our country—would be happy to publish stories that put the government in a good light before the public.

While it is true the press should maintain an arm's length relationship with the government to enable it to properly perform its role in a democratic society, that should not prevent the press from giving due recognition to the acts of the government that redound to the benefit of the people. Credit should be given whenever it is due.

I can understand the hesitation to give more space to positive news stories that relate to the government. With memories about the controlled press during the martial law years still lingering in the national mind, a newspaper that is perceived to have a pro-government slant in its news coverage could lose its credibility and, consequently, its readership.

The public's impression of the government has gone so low that reports about its good works or accomplishments are often taken with a grain of salt, if not with disbelief. And the newspaper that publishes those stories could find itself suspected of being in the payroll of the powers-that-be or whoever may be sitting in Malacañang.

Going back to the reader's complaint, I did not take it up with the editorial staff anymore because the day after I received it, the news report the reader asked for came out last Friday, in full splendor on the INQUIRER's front page.

Why do I get the feeling that extra sensory perception exists between the readers and the editorial staff of the newspaper?

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

Inappropriate festivity

"We should have celebrated with fireworks and festivities. Now that feels completely wrong."

—Sweden's Prime Minister Goeran Persson, explaining why his government dispensed with the usual New Year celebrations with hundreds of Swedes missing after the tsunami

Unnecessary investment

"Why invest more efforts to destabilize a government that is already destabilized?"

—Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, on rumors his father, deposed President Joseph Estrada, is planning another destabilization effort

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VAT spares the poor

SEN. Ralph Recto should be commended. The chair of the Senate's ways and means committee looks bent on sparing the poor from being hit by a slew of tax measures that the administration is currently pushing.

He seems to have tirelessly searched for ways to address the gaping fiscal deficit and is nearly through the whole phase of confronting the problem—from denial to acceptance. At one point, he argued that there is no need to legislate new taxes; we will outgrow the problem. How that is possible we might never find out in our lifetime.

Next, he seems to acknowledge there is indeed need for new taxes, but he specifically opposes the legislation of the one tax that matters the most in the tax reform package of the government.

A two-percentage point (20 percent) increase in VAT, which is estimated to rake in an additional P30 billion for the national coffers and ease the pressure of the fiscal problem, is for Recto unacceptable. And then he seems to have later changed his tack—maybe there's a need to increase the VAT. But it should be coterminous with President Macapagal-Arroyo's term and must, by all means, spare noodles because noodles are now the staple food of the poor.

Like a man who is just doing his job, Recto must undergo the process of mulling over the problem. The good news is, this process need not drag for long. There have been, after all, a lot of mulling over on the issue that have been done by tax experts, both local and international, and by countries that have adopted a far higher VAT rate than us.

VAT, which is by nature a consumption tax, will logically spare the poor. Aside from the fact that the VAT increase will exempt unprocessed food such as rice and vegetables, the tax is so designed such that, the more you consume, the more the tax hits you. The rich, unfortunately for them, spends more on VAT-able products rather than on VAT-exempt food products.

Coupled with the plugging of leakages in the system, such as exemptions on lawyers, the VAT becomes superior to all other taxes. Its inherent simplicity reduces the discretion of the taxman and therefore decreases corruption.

In an ideal world, a higher tax is bad and must be avoided by all means. But we live in a world where most live below poverty. On top of that, we live in a country desperately keeping its head above water. It is therefore no longer a question of whether or not this government ought to raise taxes now. It is a question of what revenue generation measure minimizes the negative repercussions on the poor and the economy. The VAT, studies show, is the better tax.

There's been too much mulling over. The government ought to act on the fiscal problem decisively and swiftly. This is not possible without the help of Congress.

—FOUNDATION FOR ECONOMIC FREEDOM INC.,
73A Maginoo St.,
Barangay Central, QC

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Time to go after bus companies

NEAL Cruz is right. ("Instead of 'wet falg', enforce traffic rules," PDI, 1/19/05) If bus and jeepney drivers in Makati can be disciplined into observing loading and unloading zones, why can't the same be done on Edsa?

How about going after the owners of the bus companies? Instead of arresting or issuing tickets to drivers who do not observe loading and unloading zones, why not take pictures of the buses? After a certain number of violations have been committed by the drivers of a bus company (not just one particular driver or bus), all the buses of that company should be banned from Edsa or its franchise should be revoked. This way, the burden of disciplining drivers would be primarily their employers', not the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority's.

But in fairness to Chair Bayani Fernando and the MMDA, the traffic situation in the metropolis has seen much improvement. It used to be that Commonwealth Avenue was a hopeless situation even late at night. But now, a 15-minute drive from Manggahan to Quezon Circle is not just a possibility but very likely—outside rush hour.

—VERNON TOTANES,
von.totanes@gmail.com

Useless step

THIS is in reaction to the news item "Top customs exec, 'dummy' dismissed." (PDI, 1/25/05) Dismissal is one step, but it is a useless step. It won't deter or stop corruption.

If the government is really serious in its anti-corruption drive, it must put all the corrupt people in jail for the rest of their lives and confiscate all their properties. How many times did we hear corrupt people getting dismissed? But did anyone of them suffer financial hardship afterwards? None. In fact, they still enjoy the fruits of their labor (theft).

I bet these people also acquired properties in other countries and were able to stash away a substantial amount in bank deposits.

—RENE OTANERF,
otanerf@yahoo.com

Truth behind missing GSIS contributions

THIS has reference to the news item "Where did GSIS premiums go? House sets probe" written by Cynthia D. Balana (PDI, 1/22/05), which was in part inaccurate and misleading.

May we clarify that the alleged missing P1 billion is an accumulated obligation to the Government Service Insurance System, incurred by the Department of Education-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao from 1997 to 2003. The ARMM, the Department of Budget and Management, and the GSIS have entered into a memorandum of agreement to address this problem of unremitted GSIS premiums.

I am compelled to write this clarification lest the issue be used as a negative propaganda and political tool to destroy the credibility of the incumbent ARMM officials, especially with the ARMM elections scheduled in August 2005.

We welcome the move of Rep. Mario Aguja to conduct a House probe on this issue so everybody concerned will know the truth.

—TOMMY A. TEE,
Pascual Subdivision,
Rosary Heights, Cotabato City

THE STORY was based on a press statement issued by the Akbayan party-list congressmen.

Upon receipt of Mr. Tee's letter, I immediately called up Representative Aguja for clarification. He is still abroad. But I did talk to his media relations officer, Joey Dimaandal, who said that neither Akbayan nor Aguja was disowning the story.

—CYNTHIA D. BALANA,
PDI reporter

Appalling hypocrisy

THE SO-CALLED "private prosecutors" in the Estrada plunder trial call for hearings thrice a week. (PDI, 1/3/05) Even at twice a week, and the need to sit down with witnesses and co-counsel, and to review voluminous documents, I would personally prefer to be out of the case, given other commitments. Our defense team has never asked for the postponement on the ground that we were not ready. Thrice a week? I am out. That has been my stand since 2001. Due process I demand for everyone, no matter who is president. Today, two of these "private prosecutors," seemingly clueless, spend a few minutes in the trial. The others are not seen at all, seemingly busy in coddling Chavit Singson.

These lawyers were with Singson last month when he said about the Arroyo administration: "We bore with all the graft and corruption but everything has an end. I think this is too much." Why did they not ask him to elaborate on such graft and corruption? After a meeting with President Macapagal-Arroyo, Singson now even wishes President Erap well? Where is the civil society, the lawyers ask? Like Singson, arguably seeking heroism's rewards. PlunderWatch is really only EstradaWatch.

These lawyers focus on Erap's *jueteng*-gate. They do not demand a special tribunal for the Marcoses, Herminio Disini, Carlos Garcia et al., or ask that Nani Perez et al. be probed.

Erap lost his mandate with no democratic debate preceding a nominal voting in the House. The "second envelope" killed him in the Senate. Yet, the prosecution did not present this document in his plunder case as it did not incriminate him at all. He has been detained since 2001. The Singson coddlers' idea of modern penology is to oppress everyone and democratize misery. Yet, they may have welcomed Marcos' decision allowing Senators Benigno Aquino and Jovito Salonga to be treated abroad despite their pending cases. They continue to try and convict the Estradas by publicity. Two of them, the people put in the Senate.

Jueteng? It may be more widespread today. On Dec. 29, 2004, a domestic I know won P40,000 on a bet of P20 in one of its variants in our neighborhood. The hypocrisy appalls as law is administered with an evil eye and an unequal hand.

—R.A.V. SAGUISAG,
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6 cops hurt in clash with gang

SAN PASCUAL, Batangas—Six policemen were wounded, two of them in critical condition, in a five-hour gun battle between suspected members of "the small Mafia of Batangas" and lawmen in Barangay Poblacion here at about 4 a.m. yesterday.

The operation also led to the arrest of eight gang members, including two women and their alleged leader, who had a bounty of P800,000 for his capture.

Senior Supt. Francisco Don Montenegro, Batangas police director, identified those wounded as Chief Insp. Jonathan Calixto, SPO1 Justine Escabarte, PO3 Manuel Abalos, PO3 Leo Fajardo, PO2 Ronald Torres and PO3 Arturo Patulot.

All are members of the elite Special Action Force (SAF), except for Patulot who is from the Batangas Provincial Police Office.

They were rushed to the Saint Patrick's Hospital in Batangas City.

Fajardo and Escabarte were in critical condition. At 3 p.m., they were airlifted to a hospital in Manila.

The firefight, according to residents here, turned the Klub Takuza, a nightclub that was ordered closed by the municipal government in 2003, into a war zone.

The place is supposedly owned by Jun Dimacuha, a nephew of Batangas Gov. Eduardo Dimacuha.

Philippine National Police chief Edgar Aglipay immediately flew to the Batangas Police Provincial Office in Barangay Kumintang Ilaya, Batangas City, to congratulate the members of the arresting team.

Brave men

During a news conference held at the Camp Miguel Malvar here, Aglipay praised the bravery of Calixto and his men, as he bared that he would recommend their immediate promotion to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Aglipay also announced that the Southern Tagalog Region will be awarded as the best regional police office in the PNP's anniversary celebration today.

Director Oscar Calderon, Calabarzon police director, said Calixto led 40 members of the SAF and the Calabarzon Traffic Management Group (TMG) who raided the supposed hideout of suspected kidnap-for-ransom gang leader Edgar Allan Alvarez in a three-story establishment in Barangay Poblacion at around 4 a.m.

He said the police received a report that the group was again planning to kidnap a prominent businessman in Batangas City.

Montenegro said the policemen were met with gunfire as they were approaching Alvarez's hideout. He said Alvarez, who has an P800,000-reward for his capture, was the subject of a warrant of arrest for the kidnapping of a Filipino-Chinese businessman in Manila a few months back and a string of carnapping and hijacking cases.

Alvarez, Montenegro added, was one of the leaders of the Jaime Moog-Alvarez syndicate that was said to be behind the series of kidnappings of prominent Filipino-Chinese entrepreneurs in Manila and Southern Tagalog.

Gunfight

Minutes after the gunfight started, the suspects lobbed a hand grenade at the policemen.

"Calixto and the five others were seriously hit by the shrapnel from the grenade. The suspects were really ready to shoot it out with our raiding team," Montenegro told the INQUIRER.

Calderon said the suspects sought the help of a reporter who facilitated the group's surrender.

"Maybe Alvarez realized that they would be killed if they continued fighting because they were overpowered," Calderon said.

Along with Alvarez, suspects Marlon Recio, 47, of Sta. Rita, San Antonio, Los Baños, Laguna; Melvin Quijano, 18, of Barangay Bolbok, Batangas City; Rodel Caballero, 26, of Kumintang Ibaba, Batangas City; Casimiro Madrona, 32, of San Pascual, Batangas; Delmar Caballero, 18; Rose Masinsin, 24, of Marikina City; and Rossel Salas, 20, of Biñan, Laguna, yielded to police after hours of negotiations.

'Small Mafia'

Calderon said Alvarez and his men "had been pestering business entities in Batangas and nearby provinces for years now."

He said that the group was also known to hijack delivery trucks of food manufacturers in Calabarzon.

It was also behind an oil pilferage syndicate whose members had victimized delivery trucks of Caltex and Shell in Batangas, he said.

"This group is like a small Mafia here in Batangas. They are toughies and bullies," Calderon described the group.

He said the assorted high-powered firearms recovered after the shootout were proofs that the group was "no ordinary criminals."

Among those confiscated were a Browning automatic rifle, a light antitank weapon, an M14 Armalite rifle, an M16 baby Armalite rifle, dozens of magazines for different guns, hundreds of ammunitions, one set of camouflage blue uniform, one Nissan Sentra with plate number URF-514, one Mitsubishi Delica with plate number RAA-239, and one Yamaga Enduro motorcycle with plate number PN-7860.

A black wig, possibly for a woman, was also among the materials seized.

Alvarez denied all the accusations against him and said he didn't do anything. But the two women were more vocal. Masinsin, who said she was the common-law wife of Recio recounted how the police abused her.

"The police kicked me in the butt when I ducked and they even poked a knife at me," Masinsin said. "I don't really know what Marlon is into, but he repairs guns that his clients order him to repair."

Salas, who claimed to be Alvarez's live-in partner, said Alvarez and his group were only the caretakers of Takuza. *Marlon Ramos and Mei Magsino-Lubis, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

12 bandits die in clash in Lanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Twelve suspected bandits were killed while three Marine soldiers were wounded in a clash in Barangay Masibay, Tubaran, Lanao del Sur on Saturday.

Members of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 8 (MBLT8) and the Lanao del Sur Police were patrolling the area when they were fired upon by about 50 armed men, according to Brig. Gen. Nelson Allaga, acting commander of the Marine Forces South.

A firefight, which lasted for almost eight hours, ensued.

Senior Supt. Sukarno Ikbala, police chief for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, said the armed men were led by Hadji Noor Kibad, who was tagged as behind the killing of civilian volunteers, and of burning houses on Jan. 26.

The wounded soldiers were identified as Lt. Rowan Rimas, Cpl. Romeo Astillero and Pfc. Ronald Frias. They were brought to the Iligan Sanitarium Hospital. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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MESSAGES

Dear Colleagues,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the 10th **Joint Annual Convention** of the **Philippine Lipid Society and the Philippine Society of Hypertension.**

The Philippine Lipid Society and the Philippine Society of Hypertension aim to stimulate research in hypertension, dyslipidemia and atherosclerosis, to increase awareness of the risks posed by hypertension and dyslipidemia and to improve the management of these conditions by specialists and primary care physicians alike. We also recognize that the control of these conditions require the concerted effort of physicians, co-health professionals, government and the community at large. As daunting as the task seems, we know it is going to be easier if we act together. Our annual joint convention offers a unique opportunity for all of us to meet, exchange knowledge and ideas and discuss important topics related to our common interest, the control of atherosclerotic disease through the control of hypertension and dyslipidemia as well as its other contributory conditions.

The Trustees of the Philippine Lipid Society and the Philippine Society of Hypertension as well as the Organizing Committee of the annual convention look forward to welcoming you personally at our convention.

Mary Anne VA Lim-Abrahan, MD President Philippine Lipid Society Overall Chair, Organizing Committee	**Esperanza I. Cabral, MD** President Philippine Society of Hypertension

NNHeS results to highlight PSH-PLS congress

The presentation of the results of the 2003-2004 National Nutrition and Health Survey (NNHeS) will be the highlight of the 10th Joint Annual Convention of the Philippine Society of Hypertension and the Philippine Lipid Society which will be held from February 2 to 4, 2005 at the EDSA Shangrila Hotel, Mandaluyong City.

This nationwide survey was undertaken to assess the prevalence of lifestyle and nutrition-related risk factors and diseases among Filipinos 20 years and above. This joint public and private sector initiative is the first ever nationwide survey and correlation study on lifestyle habits, risk factors and lifestyle diseases in the Philippines.

Spearheaded by the Philippine Society of Hypertension (PSH), the Philippine Lipid Society (PLS), the Philippine Diabetes Association (PDA), the Philippine Heart Association (PHA), the Department of Health (DOH) and the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) of the Department of Science and Technology, it drew support and cooperation from 10 other major medical organizations, including the Philippine Pediatric Society, the Philippine Society of Nephrology, the Philippine Society of Endocrinology and Metabolism, the Osteoporosis Society of the Philippines, the Philippine Association for the Study of Overweight and Obesity, the Philippine Neurological Association, the Philippine Rheumatology Association, the Philippine Society of Gastroenterology, the Philippine Society of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology and the Philippine College of Physicians.

With the PSH and the PLS at the forefront, the lead agencies structured themselves into the Steering Committee of the participating multi-sectoral organizations and engaged the FNRI to implement the Anthropometric, Biochemical and Clinical Survey during their 2003 6th National Nutrition Survey. The budget for the NNHeS 2003-2004 survey was met by contributions of the participating medical societies and the DOH. It is an offshoot of the 1998 survey on cardiovascular risk factors conducted by the PSH, the PLS, the PDA and the DOH during the 1998 5th National Nutrition Survey of the FNRI.

The whole morning of February 3, from 8 am to 12:30 pm will be devoted to the presentation of the multi-specialty topics of the 2003 - 2004 National Nutrition and Health Survey (NNHeS). The data to be unveiled will be the Prevalence of Lifestyle and Nutrition-Related Cardiovascular Diseases and Risk Factors for Atherosclerosis among Adult Filipinos. The implications of the prevalences on health policies in diagnosis and treatment as well as comparison with foreign and previous local data will be discussed. Other topics are Prevalences of Obesity and Behavioral Risk Factors such as smoking, alcohol consumption, Physical Activity and Food Consumption, the Prevalence of *Bangungot*, Stroke, Dementia and other Neurologic Abnormalities, the Prevalence of Arthritis, Gout, Osteoporosis, Kidney Diseases, Gastro-Intestinal Disorders, the Prevalence of Asthma, Allergic Rhinitis and Food Allergy, all among adult Filipinos. Included also is the Prevalence of Anemia, Vitamin A and Mineral Deficiencies among Filipino children. An Open Forum will follow the presentations.

The data should be of interest to all physicians and health workers in both the public and private sectors and the organizations that supported this survey will be pleased to have these data utilized by any individual or organization to promote health-seeking behaviors in the community.

One of the important applications of the NNHeS data is in the formulation and implementation of appropriate intervention programs of government and private sectors such as lifestyle modification programs, nutrition labeling and healthy diet campaigns for the prevention and control of lifestyle and nutrition related risk factors and diseases.

Physicians and other health workers are invited to attend the 10th Joint Annual Convention of the Philippine Society of Hypertension and the Philippine Lipid Society so that they can attend the presentation of the NNHeS.

Hypertension Specialist: A Program Which Time Has Come

The second batch of certified Hypertension Specialists, a group of physicians with special training and interest in the management of hypertension, will be formally inducted during the closing ceremonies of the 10th Joint Annual Convention of the Philippine Society of Hypertension (PSH) and the Philippine Lipid Society (PLS).

Led by PSH President, Dr. Esperanza Cabral, the Hypertension Specialists Program (HSP) was created to keep up with the developments in hypertension care all over the world.

Recognizing that prevention, diagnosis and management of hypertension is important to public health, the HSP's main goal is to form a group of physicians with expertise in the management of hypertension.

PSH acknowledges the important role played by primary care physicians in the identification and treatment of the majority of hypertensive patients, however, people behind the creation of the HSP, saw the need for "physicians with multidisciplinary knowledge, appropriate training and extensive experience that allow the expert management of the more complex and difficult cases. Thus, the creation of the HSP, a formal method of identifying and recognizing these hypertensive specialists.

A total of 58 physicians will be designated as hypertension specialists including who passed the 2nd certifying examinations that were given in October 2004. They will bring the total number of hypertension specialists in the Philippines to 190.

As hypertension specialists, this group of physicians will act as consultants and referral physicians for the diagnosis and care of hypertension, particularly of the more complex and difficult hypertension cases. They are also tasked to assist in updating and improving the national guidelines for hypertension detection and management, and are expected to remain active not just in hypertension practice but also in teaching and research. For the complete list of the PSH Hypertension Specialists, you may call the PSH and PLS Secretariat at telephone nos. 631-7970; 687-7073; 687-4821.

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PROGRAM-AT-A-GLANCE

	January 30 Sunday	February 1 Tuesday	February 2 Wednesday	February 3 Thursday	February 4 Friday
7:00					
7:15					PSH BUSINESS MEETING (Palawan)
7:30			REGISTRATION		
8:00		PRE-CONVENTION PROGRAMME Workshop on Good Clinical Practice (Palawan)		PLENARY SESSION 2 2003 - 2004 National Nutrition Health Survey (NNHeS) I. THE RESULTS OF THE NNHeS 2003-2004 ◆ Introduction, Background and Organization of the NNHes ◆ Methods and Demographic Profile ◆ Prevalence of Lifestyle - Related Atherosclerotic Risk Factors and Diseases II. IMPLICATIONS OF THE LOCAL PREVALENCE IN THE PHILIPPINES ON THE FOLLOWING: ◆ Dyslipidemia ◆ Hypertension ◆ Smoking ◆ Obesity ◆ Diabetes Mellitus ◆ Angina Pectoris and Q-Wave Myocardial Infarction and 'Bangungot' ◆ Stroke ◆ Peripheral Vascular Disease III. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS (Isla 2)	PLS BUSINESS MEETING (Palawan)
8:30					PLENARY SESSION 3 Chronotherapeutics - How to Protect Against Death at Dawn (Isla 2)
9:00			OPENING CEREMONIES OPENING OF EXHIBITS (Isla 2)		
9:45			VISIT THE EXHIBITS/COFFEE BREAK		VISIT THE EXHIBITS/COFFEE BREAK
10:00			PLENARY SESSION 1 Dysfunctional Fat in Type 2 Diabetes and CVD (Isla 2)		CS - 6 HYPERTENSION AND LIPID MANAGEMENT IN CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE ◆ Chronic Kidney Disease as a Cardiovascular Risk Factor ◆ Practice Guidelines in Hpn Management in Chronic Kidney Disease ◆ Practice Guidelines in Lipid Management in Chronic Kidney Disease (Isla 1) CS - 7 SECONDARY HYPERTENSION A RISK FOR ATHEROSCLEROSIS ◆ Primary Aldosteronism: Update of Diagnosis & Treatment ◆ Hyperthyroidism & Hypothyroidism as Aggravating Atherosclerosis ◆ Renovascular Hypertension: Importance of Early Diagnosis (Isla 3)
11:00			2005 Yolando Q.M. Sulit Young Investigator's Award (Isla 2)		
12:00			RESEARCH MODULE PRESENTATION (Isla 2)		LUNCH SATELLITE SYMPOSIUM SHCERING PLOUGH (Isla 1) NOVARTIS (Isla 2) THERAPHARMA (Isla 3)
12:30			LUNCH SATELLITE SYMPOSIUM MSD (Isla 1) PFIZER (Isla 2) MERCK (Isla 3) ABBOTT (Palawan)	LUNCH SATELLITE SYMPOSIUM PFIZER (Isla 1) LABORATOIRES FOURNIER (Isla 2) ASTRAZENECA (Isla 3) SERVIER (Palawan)	
1:00	PRE-CONVENTION PROGRAMME Lay Forum (Palawan)				
1:30					VISIT THE EXHIBITS
1:45					BP CERTIFICATION CLASS (Palawan) DEBATE "Should LDL Goal Be 70 or Less?" (Isla 2 & 3)
2:15			VISIT THE EXHIBITS	VISIT THE EXHIBITS	
2:30			CS - 1 PREVENTING DIABETES & ITS COMPLICATIONS ◆ Coronary Risk in Dysglycemia: Multiple Risk Factor Intervention ◆ Diabetes & Atherosclerosis: Novel Potential Target for Therapy ◆ Are Cardiovascular Disease Benefits Linked to Renal Protection in Diabetes w/ Hpn (Isla 1) CS - 2 MANAGEMENT OF DYSLIPIDEMIA BASED ON RECENT TRIALS ◆ Guidelines in the Management of Dyslipidemia ◆ [illegible] Heart Disease ◆ PAOD and Lipid Embolization (Isla 3)	TEAM APPROACH (Isla 1) FREE PAPER PRESENTATION (Isla 3)	
3:30					VISIT THE EXHIBITS/COFFEE BREAK
3:45					CS - 8 CURRENT AND FUTURE APPROACH TO DYSLIPIDEMIA ◆ Can we modify the Clinical Course of Atherosclerosis? ◆ When to consider Combination Therapy in Dyslipidemia? ◆ A Look at Future Management of Dyslipidemia (Isla 3)
4:30			VISIT THE EXHIBITS/COFFEE BREAK	VISIT THE EXHIBITS/COFFEE BREAK	
4:45			CS - 3 DO'S AND DONT'S IN STROKE MANAGEMENT ◆ Dos and Don'ts in the Management of Cardio Embolism ◆ Dos and Donts in Symptomatic and Asymptomatic Carotid Stenosis ◆ Dos and Donts in the Management of Unruptured Cerebral Aneurysms (Isla 1) LATE BREAKING CLINICAL TRIALS ◆ in Hypertension ◆ in Lipid ◆ in Diabetes (Isla 3)	CS - 4 ADDRESSING OBESITY EPIDEMIC ◆ Etiology of the Metabolic Syndrome: The Role of Weight Gain & Obesity ◆ Can we successfully treat Obesity & prevent its Metabolic Consequences ◆ How Physical Activity Can Diminish Obesity and Risk for Cardiovascular Disease (Isla 1) CS - 5 HYPERTENSION ISSUES IN SPECIAL POPULATION ◆ Hypertension in Pregnancy ◆ Hypertension in Adolescents ◆ Hypertension in the Elderly (Isla 3)	
5:30					CLOSING CEREMONIES and INDUCTION OF HYPERTENSION SPECIALISTS (Isla 1 & 2)
6:00		DINNER SYMPOSIUM PFIZER (Isla Ballroom)			
6:15				DINNER SYMPOSIUM THERAPHARMA (Isla Ballroom)	
7:00					

[illegible]

Experts tackle cardio vascular disease (CVD) prevention and treatment

Cardiovascular disease is the major cause of death in patients with hypertension, hyperlipidemia and diabetes. The risk of morbidity and mortality is increased across the entire spectrum of disordered blood pressure, lipid and glucose regulation, from just above what is considered normal to clinical disease. Accordingly, aggressive interventions to remedy these abnormalities, are appropriate in these high-risk individuals.

The bad news is that strokes and heart attacks are the leading causes of death and disability in adult Filipinos, even as they still suffer from the bane of developing countries, infections and malnutrition. The good news is that strokes and heart attacks can largely be prevented. Thus it is the responsibility of physicians, specialists as well as general practitioners to keep abreast of developments in the field of atherosclerosis.

Treatment options for preventing and controlling hypertension, hyperlipidemia, diabetes and risk factors that accelerate the process of atherosclerosis and result in heart attacks and strokes will be discussed in the 10th Joint Annual Convention of the Philippine Society of Hypertension and the Philippine Lipid Society. Three Plenary Sessions and eight Congress Symposia at which distinguished Filipino experts and scientists will share their knowledge with other physicians and health workers will draw attention to the theme of the convention, "Challenges in Atherosclerosis Prevention."

A debate on what level of cholesterol physicians should be aiming for in their patients will highlight our current thinking on the effect of cholesterol on the risk of heart disease and stroke. A session on strengthening the team approach will emphasize the importance of physicians and other health workers cooperating in the management of heart and stroke patients.

Of particular interest to practitioners will be a symposium on Do's and Don't's in the Management of Stroke, given the sudden concern of many patients about their risks of stroke and how they can prevent it.

The Philippine Society of Hypertension and the Philippine Lipid Society extend their invitation to all physicians and health workers to attend this convention which will be held on February 2 to 4, 2005 at the EDSA Shangrila Hotel. Interested participants may register on site or call the PSH & PLS Secretariat at telephone nos. 687-7073, 687-2841 or 631-7970.

SPEAKERS

Ms. Zenaida Abanilla
Dr. Ramon Abarquez Jr.
Dr. Nelson Abelardo
Dr. Ma. Teresa Abola
Dr. Abdias Aquino
Dr. Editha Arceo-Dalisay
Dr. Adolfo Bellosillo
Dr. Annette Borromeo
Dr. Esperanza Cabral
Dr. Leni Cañizares-Fernandez
Ms. Imelda Cardino
Dr. Rafael Castillo
Dr. Alberto Chua
Prof. Hercules Callanta
Dr. Siok Soan Cua
Dr. Antonio Dans
Dr. Erwin Del Rosario
Dr. Romeo Divinagracia
Dr. Ricardo Fernando
Dr. Loewe Go
Dr. Ruby Go
Dr. Reynaldo Imperial
Dr. Lina Lantion-Ang
Dr. Gerardo Legaspi
Dr. Mary Anne Lim-Abrahan
Dr. Augusto Litonjua
Dr. Eleanor Lopez
Dr. Mariano Lopez
Dr. Melvin Marcial
Dr. Agnes Mejia
Dr. Roberto Mirasol
Dr. Dante Morales
Ms. Sanirose Orbeta
Dr. Benita Padilla
Dr. Gregorio Patacsil Jr.
Dr. Elizabeth Paz-Pacheco
Dr. Felix Eduardo Punzalan
Dr. Eugene Reyes
Dr. Artemio Roxas Jr.
Dr. Cristina San Jose
Dr. Antonio Sibulo Jr.
Dr. Salvador Silverio
Dr. Antonio Sison
Dr. Rody Sy
Dr. Rosa Allyn Sy
Mr. Larry Tagalog
Dr. Gerry Tan
Dr. Oscar Tinio
Dr. Tommy Ty-Willing
Ms. Felicidad Velandria

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Organizing Committee of the PSH & PLS expresses sincere gratitude to the following cooperating societies / organizations and companies for their support to its Joint 10th Annual Convention.

Department of Health (DOH) • Asian Union for Microcirculation (AUM - Philippine Chapter) • Philippine Heart Association (PHA) • Philippine Society of Endocrinology and Metabolism (PSEM) • Philippine Diabetes Association (PDA) • Stroke Society of the Philippines (SSP) • Philippine Society of Nephrology (PSN) • Philippine Neurological Association (PNA) • Philippine Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP) • Philippine Association of Government Medical Practitioners, Inc. (PAGMPI) • Philippine Association of Military Surgeons (PAMS) • Philippine Academy of Physicians in School Health, Inc. (PAPSHI) • Philippine College of Occupational Medicine (PCOM) • Philippine Association for the Study of Overweight and Obesity (PASOO) • Institute for the Study of Diabetes Foundation (ISDF) • Philippine Nurses Association (PNA) • Occupational Health Nurses Association of the Philippines (OHNAP) • Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) • Nutritionist Dietitians Association of the Philippines (NDAP) • Philippine Health Social Science Association (PHSSA) • Philippine Association of Medical Technologists (PAMET) • Philippine Physical Therapy Association (PPTA)

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LIFE SUCKS TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
A boy endures the midday sun as he tries to peddle socks along Session Road in Baguio City.

DepEd reinstates sex harassment convict, then reviews appointment

BAGUIO CITY—The country's first public servant to be charged with sexual harassment has returned to work here, after almost 10 years of litigation, stirring up Baguio's feminist groups.

Alyson Belagan, whose conviction was affirmed by the Supreme Court on Oct. 9, 2004, reclaimed his post as superintendent of the division of schools in Baguio on Dec. 28, 2004, upon the instructions of Education Secretary Florencio Abad.

Belagan was accused of sexually harassing three elementary school teachers in 1994.

"I am here only until Feb. 14, my birthday, when I turn 65 and retire. I wanted to leave the service gracefully and with dignity, which is why no one even got wind of my reappointment," Belagan told the INQUIRER.

But Belagan may not get his wish.

Officials of the Department of Education are reconsidering Belagan's appointment, after members of Gabriela in Baguio challenged Abad's decision to reinstate "a convicted sexual harasser."

"[Secretary Abad] was not thoroughly advised about Belagan's legal problems by local politicians who wanted him to retire gracefully," a DepEd official said.

The official said Abad had sent a legal team to review Belagan's case.

Magdalena Gapuz, a private school principal who won Belagan's conviction, said Abad "sent a very bad signal to victims of sexual harassment."

Quoting a Gabriela statement here, Gapuz said Belagan's reinstatement was "rubbing more salt on the wounds [of his] victims."

Belagan was also introduced to several school associations, but teachers and school officials who knew of his legal situation were ready to protest his return, Gapuz said.

She said she learned of Belagan's reinstatement when she bumped into him during a recent funeral service.

"It was [awkward], yet I offered my hand as a gesture of [goodwill], and he returned the gesture, but deep inside, I was not happy," Gapuz said.

She said Belagan may even offer her an apology, but "this will not affect the pending cases against him."

Ligaya Annawi, a public school teacher, first sued Belagan and won the case before a regional trial court. The Court of Appeals reversed the lower court's decision.

In October last year, the Supreme Court affirmed a ruling of a three-member team of the defunct Department of Education, Culture and Sports that found Belagan guilty of sexually harassing Gapuz, said her lawyer Alex Bangsoy.

Gapuz was applying for permits for a small school in 1994 when Belagan made "unwanted sexual advances," said Bangsoy.

The team, headed by then Education Undersecretary Antonio Nachura, recommended the dismissal of Belagan.

While affirming the team's findings, the high court suspended Belagan for a year in recognition of his 37 years in government service. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

K9 dogs in Davao

DAVAO CITY—The city government has acquired more K-9 dogs to help police implement the anti-illegal drugs campaign. Lawyer Marvin Melodias, chief of the General Services Office, said the hounds were donated. The city government spends P40,000 a month for dog food and vitamins taken from the mayor's peace and order fund. He said Mayor Rodrigo Duterte does not mind spending a lot for dog food and vitamins if these will be for the campaign against drug trafficking and terrorism.
Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Bukidnon divided

MALAYBALAY CITY—The bill that seeks to divide Bukidnon province has been filed by Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri last year. House Bill No. 3312 seeks to separate the 10 municipalities belonging to southern Bukidnon and call the new province Bukidnon del Sur. These are Maramag, Quezon, Pangantucan, Don Carlos, Dangcagan, Kibawe, Kadingilan, Kitaotao, Damulog and Kalilangan. The combined annual income of these towns reaches about P521 million. The population is 422,824. Congress has yet to hear the proposal while public hearings here have yet to be conducted. Zubiri told reporters that creating another province would spur development in these municipalities. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

New board member

LUCENA CITY—Former Lopez town mayor Isaias Ubana II has been appointed by Malacañang as the new Quezon board member representing the 4th district to replace the late Remedios Diestro. The appointment of Ubana, also the former president of the Quezon mayors' association, was signed by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita on Dec. 20 last year. However, Ubana was only able to sit in the Sangguniang Panlalawigan last week after Gov. Wilfrido Enverga signed his appointment certificate on Jan. 12. Ubana pledged to work and cooperate in all development programs of the board.
Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

24 cholera cases in Albay

LEGAZPI CITY—The Regional Health Office here confirmed that there were 24 cholera and 135 diarrhea cases in Pioduran, Albay. Dr. Aurora Teresa M. Daluro, RHO epidemiologist, said they were closely monitoring the diarrhea cases for possible development into cholera. Dr. Luis Domingo B. Mendoza, provincial health officer II, said a group sent to survey the area found that a water pipe from the town's reservoir that runs through a swampy area was contaminated. Mendoza said the local government had already discontinued the operation of that pipe to prevent further contamination. Although the figures were high, the provincial health office has not yet declared a cholera outbreak in the town.
Jed Ll. Bacason, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Church cleansing ritual

CALAMBA CITY—The parish priest of the Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Taysan, Batangas, last week said they had to close their church for at least a week after a businessman was gunned down while attending Mass on Sunday. Fr. Reggie Plad said they closed the church premises while they performed rituals "to cleanse the area." Residents and churchgoers in Taysan were shocked after three unidentified gunmen shot dead businessman Feliciano Macatangay as he was about to receive communion at around 6 a.m. The victim died from at least two bullet wounds, said Senior Supt. Don Montenegro, Batangas police director. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

2 NPA rebels slain

LEGAZPI CITY—At least two members of the New People's Army were killed in an encounter with government soldiers at about 9:30 a.m. in Jan. 21 at the boundary of Barangays Lupi, Tinambac and Paatan, Goa, in Camarines Sur. A military report said an Army patrol led by 2Lt. Nonie Alcala of Alpha Co. encountered 10 NPA rebels and that the two rebels were killed during a 30-minute firefight. The rebels, he said, were members of the Kilusang Sangay sa Platon-Lebanon under a certain Ka Philip of Front Committee 75 that operates at the Caramoran Peninsula. The military said there were no casualties on their side. *Gil Francis Arevalo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Illegal lumber seized in Kudarat

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Combined operatives of the police and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in central Mindanao seized some 15,000 board feet of illegally-cut lumber in Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat, on Friday night.

Jim Sampulna, DENR Central Mindanao director, told the INQUIRER that the lumber was owned by Emi and Manting Kirab, alleged former field commanders of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in the area.

Tip

The hot lumber was confiscated in Sitio Malalag, Barangay Napnapan, in Palimbang after a civilian informer tipped off the DENR regional office.

Sampulna added that only a truckload was brought for evidence and exhibit to the DENR regional office.

The remaining three truckloads were temporarily placed under the custody of the DENR assistance center in Barangay Milbuk, Palimbang.

Sampulna said that prior to the apprehension, he coordinated with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) field commander in the area to ensure the safety of his men and the police.

Campaign

The local MILF commander reportedly gave the assurance that nothing would happen to the apprehending team.

The operation, Sampulna claimed, was part of the DENR's intensified campaign against rampant illegal cutting down of trees in Palimbang and other parts of central Mindanao.

Earlier, DENR Secretary Michael Defensor ordered a nationwide crackdown on illegal loggers.

Palimbang is a rich source of lumber for housing projects in Cebu and other parts of the country and for boat-making by several fishing firms here. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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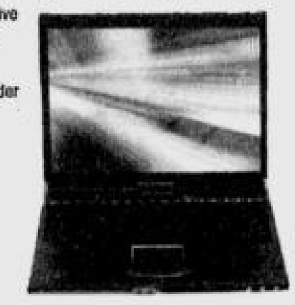

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Tourists back in Baguio after meningo scare

BAGUIO CITY—Last week, only a table was occupied in a popular restaurant on Legarda Street here because of the meningococcemia scare. A week later, the place was filled to the rafters.

In fact, the whole Legarda Street, where bars and restaurants line up a 100-meter stretch, was back to its party mode.

Hotels and inns also registered a modest rise in admissions from Friday to Sunday. Participants in study tours, some coming from as far as Leyte, were also seen shopping in *ukay-ukay* (used clothes) shops around the city.

After Jan. 24 when the Department of Health downgraded the meningococcemia alert here, tourists have been coming back to the city.

"The tourists have come back," said Purificacion Molintas, Department of Tourism-Cordillera director. "I hope this trend will go on."

Losses

During the meningococcemia alert, Molintas said the tourism industry was losing P80 million a week. She said there was a 90-percent drop in tourist arrivals in early January.

The city also came out with the project "Bloom Baguio Bloom," which promises to revive the local tourism industry, including bringing up a national VIP (very important person) every week.

This week, Sen. Richard Gordon and US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone were the featured visitors.

The Baguio Association of Hotels and Inns (Bahai) has come out with gimmicks to attract back the tourists, including free one-day stay in selected rooms for a weekend package.

Drumbeaters

Even the World Health Organization, which sent an international team of epidemiologists in the past weeks to investigate this particular strain of meningococcal disease, became unexpected drumbeaters for Baguio tourism.

Molintas said Dr. Eric Bertherat, a senior epidemiologist of WHO in Geneva, gave her a handwritten note saying "Baguio is definitely one of the nicest destinations."

In its bulletin on Jan. 28, WHO recorded 98 cases of meningococcal disease in the Cordillera from Oct. 1, 2004 to Jan. 28.

It listed 74 cases from Baguio City and Benguet, 22 from Mt. Province and two from Ifugao.

WHO also said there were 32 deaths or a case fatality ratio of 33 percent.

Meningococcal disease not only includes meningococcemia but also bacterial meningitis and septicemia (blood poisoning). However, meningococcemia was more feared because of its high fatality ratio.

In its bulletin on Jan. 19, WHO noted 78 cases of meningococcemia in the Cordillera, including 38 in Baguio.

"The Department of Health and the local government health authorities, assisted by a team from the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, have established provincial multidisciplinary operation centers in Mt. Province and Benguet to contain the outbreak," WHO said in its Jan. 28 report.

"Laboratory capacity for the collection and detection of meningococcal disease and management of cases has been strengthened. Intensive surveillance and contact tracing in the community has also been carried out, while further epidemiological studies are ongoing," it added. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Planned golf course in Chocolate Hills hit

TAGBILARAN CITY—The provincial chapter of a militant party-list organization said the plan to construct a golf course in the Chocolate Hills area showed the government's "real purpose" in placing it under the National Integrated Protected Area System (Nipas) Act.

Bayan Muna-Bohol coordinator John Ruiz warned that if the golf course plan was approved, "farm lands would then be converted and dislocation of farmers [inevitable] in projects like [a] golf course."

Sagbayan Mayor Jimmy Torrefranca earlier bared plans to build a "world-class" golf course in the area where the Chocolate Hills is located.

Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado pledged support for the project while brushing aside apprehensions that the natural wonder in the province would be adversely affected.

Aumentado agreed with Torrefranca that the existence of a golf course in Sagbayan "would be beneficial to the people in the area."

Ruiz, however, pointed out that the target area was covered by Presidential Proclamation (PP) No. 1037, which prohibits the defacement of any of the hills and buffer zones at the foot.

He recalled that farmers inside the protected areas had opposed PP 1037 because they could not secure titles to the lands.

The farmers led by the Hugpong sa mga Mag-uumang Bol-anon (Humabol) feared that if PP 1037 was fully implemented, agricultural development in some portions of the land they were tilling would be banned.

Ruiz said that because of the strong position and struggle of the farmers under Humabol, an affiliate of the militant Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, PP 1037 was amended.

He said the amendment resulted in a reduction of coverage areas, the number of hills, and the area for buffer zones. He did not give specifics.

Ruiz warned that water would also be a big issue in maintaining a golf course and that "water resources for drinking and [farm use] would then be diverted to [the] golf course use."

He said the implementation of laws could be summed up in the question of "whose interests it would benefit and who will be affected."

"The position of support of Governor Aumentado to the planned golf course shows how his administration is really handling issues of environmental concerns," Ruiz added. *Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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A 10-KILOWATT windmill in Ayoyo, Caparispisan, Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte has proven that natural sources of power like wind can energize their homes. PDI PHOTO

Wind, hydro power: Energy of the future

By Vincent Cabreza, Cristina Arzadon and Juliet Cataluña
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

The Preventable Crisis

IT WILL take more time, but the future may well be in alternative sources of energy.

The Cordilleras, for instance, have the potential to generate up to 500 megawatts of "clean energy." The abundance of rivers in the area can power up a chain of mini-hydroelectric power plants for half of each year. And a wind resource analysis and mapping study conducted for the Philippines by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory has already identified several areas which could benefit from wind power installations.

Last August, the country's first commercial wind diesel hybrid farm, in Mahatao town in Batanes, started operations. The P56-million facility is powered by three wind turbines (sourced from France) designed to last between 25 and 50 years.

Officials of the First Philippine Energy Corp., the project designer, said a similar hybrid power facility supplies the power requirements of a hospital and community facilities in Fiji.

At the launch, Energy Secretary Vince Perez said the wind diesel project could be used as a "living laboratory" for students and could be tapped as one of the province's tourist attractions. If President Macapagal-Arroyo's goal of putting up as much as 345 MW of wind power could be realized by the end of her term in 2010, he said, "the Philippines will be the largest producer of wind power in Asia and the leader [in that aspect] is Batanes."

Wind power is among the most cost-effective renewable technologies available today. According to an online website on wind power, more than 13,000 MW of wind power have already been installed worldwide.

A 25.5 MW wind power plant in Bangui, Ilocos Norte, developed by Northwind Power Development Corp., started operating recently. And the state-run Philippine National Oil Co. is developing a separate 42-MW wind farm in nearby Burgos town; it is expected to be operational by March.

"Interest in wind power is mounting as there is no showing that high oil prices will slip. In this oil-dependent generation where energy policies are being made to adapt to prevailing oil prices, the Philippine wind farm is our modest contribution to reducing our dependence on oil," said Ferdinand Dumlao, Northwind chair.

US-funded study

The other areas identified as wind-rich include the Babuyan Islands, also north of Luzon; and the higher interior terrain of Mindoro, Samar, Leyte, Panay, Negros, Cebu, Palawan and eastern Mindanao. (The US Department of Energy sponsored the study for the National Power Corp.), the Philippine Council for Industry and Energy Research and Development, and PNOC.

Unlike PNOC, which can sell electricity generated from the Burgos facility to users outside Ilocos Norte, power from the Northwind plant will be fed exclusively to the Ilocos Norte Electric Cooperative or Inec, a local electric utility.

An energy sales agreement between Northwind and Inec binds the wind plant developer to operate and maintain the facility and deliver 7 MW to Inec every year for 20 years. This is about a fourth of Ilocos Norte's total power requirement of 26 MW. (A study shows that Ilocos Norte's total power needs is equivalent to the power requirement of SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City.)

The cheaper electricity means a 7-percent reduction in power costs from prevailing Napocor rates.

Unlike major hydroelectric plants, which require the controversial construction of dams, mini-hydros can generate from 101 kW to 10 MW by relying on natural river flow. Best of all, the technology does not alter the water's quality, the river's local habitat or the surrounding air.

Harnessing all of the Cordillera's rivers will generate power bigger than the current output of the San Roque Multipurpose Dam project on the Pangasinan-Benguet border or the Casecnan Multipurpose Irrigation and Power project in Nueva Vizcaya, said Rene Ronquillo, chief operating officer of the Aboitiz-owned Hydroelectric Development Corp. (Hedcor).

But the few investors in micro-hydro may soon be moving out of the Cordillera, Ronquillo lamented.

Hedcor is a Davao-based power firm that relocated to Benguet before the 1990s power crisis struck. Despite a history of strong local opposition to new water projects, because of the government's construction of massive hydroelectric dams in the 1950s and 1960s, Hedcor stuck it out with micro-hydro.

Ronquillo recalled being chased out of Benguet towns when Hedcor first offered to build mini-hydro systems in 1989, after being told that Ibalois were displaced by the 75-MW Ambuclao Dam (which was built in 1954) and the 100-MW Binga Dam (which was built some 10 years after Ambuclao).

It took a decade for Benguet residents to warm up to the firm's concept of "clean energy."

Since 1986, Hedcor has rehabilitated 14 mini-hydro plants in Benguet. The company generates 39.55 MW of electricity a year; the towns that host these plants have also grown economically.

Bakun hosts the 64-MW Ferdinand L. Singit plant, the 2.4-MW Lower Labay plant, and the 3.6-MW Lon-oy plant.

Sablan, Tuba and La Trinidad towns host the Baguio government's 4-MW Asin plants, the 10.75-MW Bineng plants and the 8-MW Ampohaw plant.

Kalinga, whose river sources are some of the most pristine in the country, has outgrown most of its misgivings about power facilities on account of the Benguet example, and has invited Hedcor to put up plants there, Ronquillo said.

But most of Hedcor's future expansions are being relocated back to Davao, Ronquillo said.

Unclear support

He lamented that the government's unclear support for clean energy is driving away power from the countryside, where electricity is much needed.

Malacañang is a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol, which seeks a global reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, but it set aside such provisions when it proceeded to reform the power sector, he said.

Ronquillo said the government would still need to increase the value of clean energy or new and renewable power projects like hydros and geothermal plants.

"It is still cheaper to operate a 100-MW coal plant than a bunch of mini-hydros," Ronquillo said.

"[But] if the government will consider all the cost that goes into a coal-fired plant—pollution, the introduction of greenhouse gases—then mini-hydros become competitive," he said.

Most of the mini-hydro facilities in the Philippines are based in rural areas, Ronquillo said. Their combined output accounts for no more than 2 percent of the total electricity produced today.

"If the government mandates [the National Transmission Corp. or Meralco] to buy that 2 percent, you can more than double [the renewable energy] that is produced today," he said.

The law does not exempt new and renewable energy plants from additional fees covering the distribution of hydro-produced or geothermal energy, he added.

Also, Napocor "has made it difficult" for distributors to buy power from mini-hydros, he said, because the state-run firm needs to retain and develop high-profile purchase contracts to make itself attractive to investors.

"What we could do is run the [mini-hydros] during the rainy season, and come in with geothermal plants during summer. It works because geothermal facilities can store power. If you don't use it today, it's there tomorrow. The run-off river [system of all mini-hydros is different]. If you don't use it today, it is gone tomorrow," he said.

Natural gas

The alternative source of energy most often cited is non-renewable, however.

The $4.5-billion Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power has added "clean" natural gas to the country's power mix since 2002.

Methane, the major component of natural gas, has been dubbed the "fuel of the future" or the "green" fuel because of its clean qualities. According to a Department of Energy study, the use of natural gas would also help lessen carbon dioxide emission in the country by at least five million tons annually. *With a report from Joanna Teressa P. Los Baños and Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

No risk, no gain sure path to failure

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political and social change. Within that period, the road map for change should be clear.

In the case of the second Arroyo presidency, the picture we get is incremental, not dramatic, change. It is a picture of a becalmed presidency, almost trapped in a drift too early for its own good.

The guiding philosophy of the administration seems to be to avoid taking political risks.

Dangers of playing safe

Playing safe, to avoid errors, might work well if one is ahead, but the administration is not ahead. It is, in fact, struggling and playing catch-up.

In her seventh month in office, the satisfaction rating in public opinion polls on her performance has plummeted to its lowest level compared to ratings of at least three previous presidents in a similar period.

In sports, as much as in politics, when one is behind in the score cards, percentage playing is the surest way to defeat. The political axiom, no risk, no gain, still holds true.

Changes left people cold

The first extensive Cabinet shake-up occurred in July and August last year, when the President appointed Rep. Florencio Abad as secretary of education, Raul Gonzalez as secretary of justice, Michael Defensor as environment secretary, Arthur Yap as agriculture secretary, Alberto Romulo as foreign secretary, Rene Villa as agrarian secretary, Avelino Cruz as defense secretary, Eduardo Ermita as executive secretary and Angelo Reyes as interior secretary.

Other than these changes, the first post-May 2004 Cabinet hardly contained new faces, and failed to excite the public's imagination and expectations for great things to come.

Presidential weapon

Amid political and economic crises, a Cabinet revamp is a weapon in the hands of a beleaguered government to signal that it has been recharged with initiatives to overcome the crises.

When the President directed Defense Secretary Cruz on Nov. 28, 2004 to undertake a thorough revamp of the DND, starting with four undersecretaries, the purge was in response to corruption in the Armed Forces, highlighted by the scandal over the alleged unexplained wealth of the former AFP comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia.

Cruz's appointment signaled a move to put the military firmly under the control of civilian officials. It came amid continuing reports of unrest in the Armed Forces and of coup conspiracies, which had plagued the administration since the Oakwood mutiny in July 2003.

The November purge was described by the President as dictated by the "need for a fresh wind" of reforms in the DND. It followed opinion poll surveys showing that the number of Filipinos concerned over graft and corruption had jumped from 23 percent in February to 39 percent in October 2004. The jump was attributed to the corruption scandal in the AFP comptroller's office.

New thrust

Last week, a new economic team was appointed to the Cabinet, indicating that the President had refocused her priority, from corruption and national security toward the financial deficit crisis.

The team brings in new recruits from the private business sector. It is composed of Juan Santos as secretary of trade and industry, Cesar Purisima as secretary of finance, Raphael Lotilla as secretary of energy, and Alberto Lina as customs commissioner.

Santos was chief executive at Nestlé Philippines, Lotilla was president of Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp., and Lina was chair of Airfreight 2100.

Purisima was shifted from the Department of Trade to the finance department, following the resignation of Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong. Lotilla takes over the energy department following the resignation of Secretary Vincent Perez, and faces the hard task of averting a looming power shortage that could cause an economic slowdown.

New vigor

The business sector applauded the appointments whose criteria departed from those used in the previous revamps in that the new team was based mainly on considerations of technocratic merit. The previous revamps were marked by appointments as payoffs for political debts.

The team was appointed to present a new visage of vigor to the administration which is encountering difficulties in pushing through Congress eight key revenue measures to close the gaping chasm of the fiscal deficit. Only two of the tax measures have been enacted into law.

The team is also directed at gaining the confidence of the international investment community.

The revamp was made in the wake of the downgrading of the country's credit ratings by international credit ratings organization Standard and Poor's. The downgrade was not as large as feared, and the administration heaved a sigh of relief that the ratings fell only by one notch.

Challenge to GMA

Clearly, the latest Cabinet revamp was not only intended to deliver more impressive results in overcoming the deficit and improving revenue collection, but was also equally addressed to get investments flowing into the Philippines.

Change in Cabinet personnel may give the administration a fresh burst of energy, but it is at best cosmetic unless the revamp is accompanied by improvement in the President's capacity to galvanize congressional support for her eight-measure financial reform agenda.

The strong resistance encountered by Ms Arroyo's tax measures in Congress, where her allies are the majority in both the House and the Senate, is a test of and a challenge to her political skills. Santos, et al., in the new economic management team can't make up for the President's deficiency in political skills in getting things done.

Party guns for '07 polls, bars pork lovers, 'trapos'

From page A1

the dirty tides of *trapo* [traditional] politics.

Founded by gun-control lobbyist Reynaldo "Nandy" Pacheco, Kapatiran declared on Saturday its intention to join the 2007 elections, from the senatorial race down.

If it's making an early head start, that's because the group will only settle for a few good men and women who will resist the perks of power. It hopes that by 2007, it will have assembled a 12-member senatorial ticket who will distinguish itself from the rest—by shunning pork barrel funds.

"We will put together a full slate of servant-leaders who will go against the pork barrel system," Pacheco said during a party meeting at a businessman's house in Greenhills, San Juan.

Kapatiran touts itself as a "viable alternative to the existing political structure and undesirable practices, a party for the future that appeals to nontraditional politicians and idealistic youth."

The abolition of the pork barrel system is among its 27 objectives.

The party was actually established in 2003 but failed to organize for the May elections last year. It was accredited by the Commission on Elections on May 8—barely two days before polling day.

Making a difference

Some 20 members—mostly businessmen, lawyers and civic leaders—mapped out their strategy on Saturday to build up a nationwide base of voters and potential candidates. They also launched the nationwide distribution of membership forms and pamphlets.

Also known as the Alliance for Common Good, Kapatiran believes in the premise, as Pacheco put it, "'the root cause of the country's problems is moral."

"What will make us different (from the other parties) is that our national platform is clear and specific, aimed at enhancing the common good, promoting the culture of virtue and the politics of duty," he said.

Between now and the next election season, the group will engage in a campaign for voter education and "'spread our founding principles and political platform, informing our people where the party proposes to lead the country," Pacheco said.

Party objectives

The group, which considers itself ecumenical although more Catholic in mouthing slogans, has for its "Objective No. 1" a familiar Biblical passage: "Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you."

The rest are, well, quite specific: Kapatiran, once it has placed members in power, will try to "dismantle social structures that glorify guns, sex and pornography, the culture of death and violence, vice, materialism and hedonism."

It will scrap the death penalty, promote natural family planning methods, and ban "sports (like boxing) whose main aim is to inflict violence and injury on the opponent."

It will disapprove of "all forms of gambling" and the "unwholesome practice of setting up billboards naming public officials responsible for (a government) project."

It will call for an "end to the practice of appointing former military officials as secretary of defense." While on the subject, why not "rename" that agency to "Department of Peace?" it suggested.

Character change first

The party will propose that elected or appointed public officials not be allowed to write columns, appear in movies, TV and ads, or work as broadcast commentators.

Pacheco said that while Kapatiran favored amending the Constitution, "heaven will not fall if we can't do it now. Because there should be character change first, before we have Charter change."

Pacheco, 72, said that while the party would start looking for people to field in the next elections, he would not be among them.

He said the group would link up with churches and would expect clergymen to be among its frontline recruiters.

"Let's make this the mission of the laity; bishops and priests cannot do it by themselves," he told his party mates.

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	(PM)	Gender Sensitivity and Domestic Violence (*MCLE Prescribed*)	Three (3) (1:30-4:30)	Prof. Myrna S. Feliciano
08 February	(AM)	Update in Legal Ethics	Three (3) (9:00-12:00)	Justice Nicolas P. Lapena
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09 February	(AM)	Anti-Money Laundering Act (Investigation and Prosecution of Money Laundering) (*MCLE Prescribed*)	Three (3) (9:00-12:00)	Atty. Celia E. Sandejas
	(PM)	Update in Taxation	Three (3) (1:00-4:00)	Com. Liwayway Vinzons Chato
		Developments in ADR	Two (2) (4:15-6:15)	Prof. Alfredo F. Tadiar
10 February	(AM)	Update in Civil Procedure	Three (3) (9:00-12:00)	Justice Hilarion L. Aquino
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		International Law	Two (2) (4:15-6:15)	Prof. Harry L. Roque
11 February	(AM)	Update in Family Law	Three (3) (9:00-12:00)	Prof. Danilo L. Concepcion
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Major players elude gov't drive against illegal logging in Aurora

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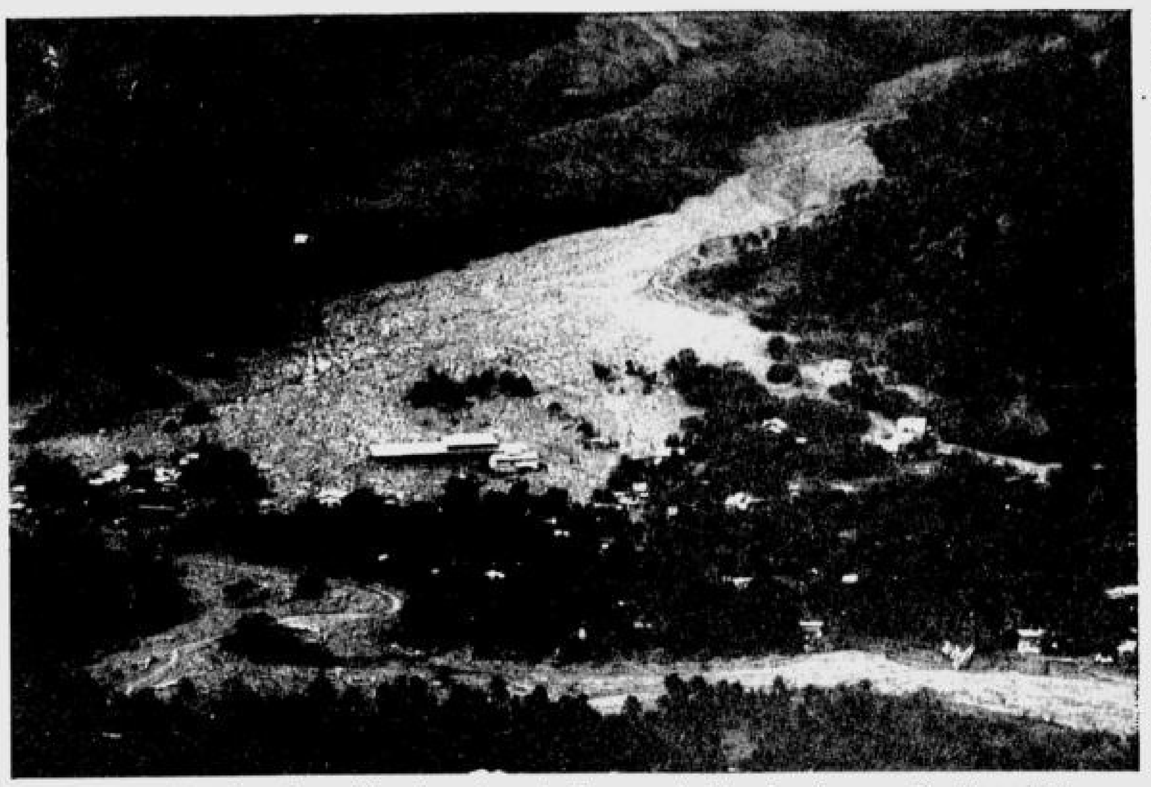

AERIAL shot of logs that clogged the river channel of Logawan in Dingalan, Aurora, after it was hit by Tropical Depression "Winnie." PDI PHOTO

lies have for decades tried to establish more than just formal ties with politicians and bureaucrats who could open the gates to the country's vast forest land.

The perception, at least within the DENR, is that such ties come in handy whenever the department decides to implement rules by the book, or when government decides to crack down on errant loggers—something that seems to happen seasonally and selectively, but usually after a disaster and a significant loss of lives.

Focus on hot logs

In the current anti-illegal logging campaign, for example, Defensor has so far zeroed in mostly on those found in possession of "hot logs" or illegally cut trees, mostly medium-sized local perpetrators who lack the permits required for logging. In reality, however, the violators include big well-connected companies with government-approved operations covering thousands of hectares of forest land or wealthy families which use valid permits to cut trees in areas they are not supposed to touch.

By definition of the Forestry Management Bureau, an illegal logger is anyone who cuts and harvests trees in violation of forestry laws, rules and regulations. This includes those who may hold legal concessions to cut trees but violate the terms and conditions of their tree-cutting permits.

DENR bureaucrats say this was exactly why Toplite's harvesting activities were suspended almost two years ago. A team of foresters from Manila and the regional office had found the company to have committed various violations, including the cutting of trees beyond its borders in Dipaculao town, Aurora, encroaching on land that was already part of Quirino.

The team even recommended that the DENR consider the "eventual cancellation" of Toplite's Ifma, which had been issued just months earlier by then Secretary Elisea Gozun's own predecessor at the DENR, Heherson Alvarez.

The Ifma is an agreement with the government, allowing private entities to exclusively "develop, manage, protect and utilize" a specific piece of "forest land of the public domain" for a period of 25 years (renewable for another 25). Under the agreement, the government and the private company or individuals agree to share the fruits of the land.

Soft on Toplite

DENR insiders say that although the foresters' report put Toplite in an unflattering light, the company later found support higher up in the bureaucracy.

In August 2004, a memorandum to Gozun signed by one environment undersecretary, one assistant secretary and two directors disputed the foresters' findings, and even reproached them for commenting on matters that were supposedly outside their area of concern.

The four officials were soft on Toplite, and yet played safe. "We find no serious ground that would warrant the cancellation of Ifma 2002-02 ... In the same vein, we find no reason to lift outright the order suspending the harvesting operations of Toplite," they said.

The officials said Toplite's suspension could be lifted after a review of its Comprehensive Development and Management Plan (CDMP). Any Ifma should be based on such a plan, which is drawn for the area approved by the DENR.

A depaertment insider, though, says Gozun sat on the officials' memo and decided to leave the matter for her successor, which turned out to be Defensor, to resolve.

Requirements fulfilled

All this time, the company had continued cutting trees since only its harvesting operations had been suspended. Toplite owner Belen Chua, however, says the firm decided to move away from the area near Quirino, which she describes as a complicated boundary dispute.

Chua adds that the company complied with the requirements for a lifting of the suspension, including revising the company's CDMP.

"Before Gozun left, we fulfilled all the requirements," says Chua. "She just didn't want to sign it because it would appear to be a midnight deal."

She denies that her company is logging illegally. Although Toplite has been in the wood processing business for the past 18 years, she says that it was only three years ago that her family decided to cut and harvest logs themselves in Dipaculao.

Chua notes that Toplite has provided employment to some 100 local residents since it started operations in 2002.

"Those provinces need the jobs," she says, pointing out that provinces like Aurora are among the poorest in the country. Otherwise, she says, residents resort to theft and crime, including illegal logging.

Chua says that Toplite is being dragged unjustly into the issue of illegal logging, and that the crackdown has adversely affected the wood-and-lumber business. Because of the nationwide suspension of cutting permits ordered recently by President Macapagal-Arroyo, wood has been harder to come by.

Chua reveals that lumber is now 30 percent more expensive, and the illegal loggers who defy the President's orders have been selling their products for as much as P32 per board foot when it used to be just P26.

Before the suspension on cutting, lumber cost P18 per board foot. According to Chua, foreign firms from countries like Malaysia and Indonesia are the ones now reaping the benefits of a dearth of local wood, and are stepping up lumber exports to the Philippines to fill the vacuum.

Defensor's neighbor

Chua denies reaping benefits from any ties with any official; she says that Defensor was not present at the wedding that had taken place before the most recent tragedy traced to logging. But the environment secretary himself admits it, and even explains that he stood as *ninong* there because one of the Chua sisters, Pauline, is his neighbor at an exclusive village in Quezon City.

He says, however, that there was no wedding gift from the DENR. "Toplite was never allowed to operate," he says.

Still, the situation has improved for Toplite under his watch. His subordinates argued for the full resumption of Toplite's activities. Regional officials recommended, as a prerequisite to the lifting of the suspension, approval of Toplite's CDMP for its Ifma area.

Defensor admits having signed the CDMP but says he withheld approval on the number of trees—called allowable cut—the company is authorized. As far as he is concerned, though, the issue is "moot and academic," since the President has imposed a suspension on the permits to cut trees all over the country.

Chua, for her part, says Toplite was able to secure a lifting of the suspension on harvesting activities, but that such operations are now at a standstill. She also says her company has stopped cutting trees as well, in compliance with the President's order.

Turning a blind eye

In theory, holders of timber and forestry permits who violate the terms are supposed to be the easiest to catch. This is because, Defensor says, "they have clear agreements with the government, and definite areas of operations." Besides, they are supposed to follow definite procedures when obtaining such permits.

But DENR officials are not always alert for such violations, and some even help logging companies commit these.

In early 2003, the same team of foresters that discovered the violations on Toplite's boundaries had also recommended the filing of formal charges against the regional, provincial and community environment officers who oversaw Toplite's Ifma application. The foresters said these officials became responsible for "rampant illegal logging" for failing to fulfill their duties.

Apparently, these local and regional environment officers had either missed or turned a blind eye to Toplite's failure to hold consultations with the community as required by law. A public meeting on the Toplite Ifma was held in Barangay Dinadiawan in Dipaculao only on April 29, 2003, several months after the Ifma had already been approved by Secretary Alvarez.

The minutes of that meeting show local leaders asking environment officials why the application of Toplite was approved without public consultation. The provincial environment officer's response: "There were resolutions passed by barangay officials ... and the municipal government of Dipaculao showing support to the application (of Toplite). As duly elected officials they have the right to decide regarding the issue and this was the basis used by the DENR in approving the Ifma application of Toplite."

Identical resolutions

The foresters, however, discovered that the resolutions from the three barangay councils concerned appeared to be identical in number and the wording. "The team concluded that DENR employees together with Toplite Lumber prepared them," they said in their report.

"They had with them the prepared resolutions when they went around and consulted the barangay council members and got the respective signatures regarding the endorsement of the LGUs (local government units) for the application of Toplite for Ifma, which should not be the case."

Chua insists, "We have complied with the conditions of our Ifma." This includes reforesting some parts of her company's logging area. With cutting activities suspended, she says her company is keeping itself busy planting gmelina trees, whose wood is popular among furniture makers.

(To be concluded.)

8 KEYS TO YOUR DIFFERENT INTERESTS

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$60-M pearl tied to misfortunes

From page A1

for generations; the convolutions on its surface resemble the human brain.

According to legend, the pearl was lost in a shipwreck centuries ago, then found in 1934 off Palawan by a diver who drowned when he reached into a huge clam to take it.

The clam and the diver were pulled to shore and the island's chief, a Muslim, took possession of the pearl and named it.

History turns bloody

About five years later, Wilburn Dowell Cobb saved the life of the chief's son and was given the pearl in gratitude. Cobb's heirs sold it in 1980 for $200,000 to Beverly Hills jeweler Peter Hoffman who, in turn, sold part of its ownership to Barbish.

The two men formed the now defunct World's Largest Pearl Co. Inc. in California and raised money by selling interests in the pearl to investors, including Joe Bonicelli.

This is where the history turns bloody.

$32.4-M judgment

The pearl is now part of the largest wrongful death judgment in Colorado history after a jury recently awarded $32.4 million to Bonicelli's adult children.

The children sued their father's estate for the 1975 death of their mother, which they claimed was a contract killing.

When the father died in 1998, police said they determined that the decades-old killing was carried out on Bonicelli's orders.

Now his children want the pearl sold so they could be paid the settlement they won against their father's estate. They plan to use the money to establish a foundation in their mother's name to help abused women and children, said their lawyer Richard Tegtmeier.

Pearl to go

Bonicelli left his estate to his youngest daughter, whom he fathered with his second wife.

Tegtmeier said further court action would be necessary to determine how his clients would receive their money—but it would have to include selling the pearl.

Barbish, who still owns part of the pearl, wants to be rid of it—but on his terms.

"We are donating that pearl," he said. "We don't want the money for it. We want it to go to a charity for everybody to see and view, either in a museum or a presidential library." AP

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Chaos seen with TRO on 3 MMDA schemes

By Margaux C. Ortiz

EXPECT chaos back in the streets and in retrieving confiscated licenses once a temporary restraining order (TRO) on three key Metro Manila traffic schemes takes effect.

That was the warning aired by Chair Bayani Fernando of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

He said, "The absence of an effective traffic scheme would mean chaos."

Fernando was referring to the Metropolitan Traffic Ticketing System (MTTS), No Physical Contact Policy and the Edsa Organized Bus Route Project.

On Thursday, Judge Cesar Santamaria, of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 145, issued a 20-day TRO on the three MMDA traffic schemes.

The restraining order was in response to a petition by nine transport groups which claimed that the implementation of the schemes trampled on "their constitutional right to due process which necessarily include their right to life."

Groups that sought the TRO are the Pinagisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper Operators Nationwide (Piston), Philippine Confederation of Drivers and Operators-Alliance of Concerned Transport Operators (PCDO-ACTO), Alliance of Transport Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines (Altodap), Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association (Fejodap), Makati Jeepney Operator and Driver Alliance (MJODA), Integrated Metro Bus Operators Association (Imboa), North East Manila Bus Operators Group (Nembog) and Provincial Bus Operators Association of the Philippines (PBOAP).

Fernando lamented the court's decision, saying "I could not believe that the judge would issue such an order considering how important and effective the traffic policies are."

He added, "It is unbelievable that the court would allow itself to be used by transport groups, which have their own interests (to protect)."

The chair explained that with the schemes, the MMDA uncovered some operators' illegal practices like their deployment of colorum and out-of-line units.

Up to yesterday, however, the MMDA had yet to receive a copy of the TRO, the implementation of which is dependent on the putting up of a P100,000 bond by the petitioning transport groups.

The bond, the court said, was to cover damages that the MMDA might incur due to the issuance of the TRO.

But the TRO on the schemes was the least of the MMDA and the motoring public's problems.

The suspension of the traffic schemes would mean going back to old ways of doing things, according to MMDA General Manager Robert Nacianceno.

For one, the suspension of the MTTS would mean the resumption of license confiscations and the issuance of traffic violation receipts. These, in turn, would entail drivers lining up again at MMDA redemption centers.

And that is where real trouble begins.

With the implementation of the MTTS last year, the MMDA shut down its nine license redemption centers in Metro Manila.

The centers were closed because with the MTTS, traffic violators were only issued tickets for which corresponding fines could be paid at any of the hundreds of branches of a local bank.

During the effectivity of the TRO, drivers whose licenses would be confiscated would all have to line up at one place: the MMDA office in Makati City, which the agency plans to use as a temporary redemption center.

"Motorists would surely be inconvenienced because instead of merely paying their traffic fines at any Metrobank branch, they would have to line up with thousands of other motorists in a single redemption center," Fernando said.

Businessmen getting instant treat in Manila

By Tarra V. Quismundo

EVERYTHING is going instant.

Businessmen in Manila renewing documents or opening a new enterprise can get their permits and licenses as soon as they pay the required fees.

This was the assurance of the city's so-called Pre-Approved Permit System (MPS) as announced by Mayor Lito Atienza in a press statement.

"This is meant to make it easier to do business in Manila," said Atienza.

He explained that it was aimed at reducing red tape and minimizing the opportunity for graft.

The mayor was referring to the practice of inspectors of demanding money from business owners for them to give an approval to their application.

Initially, the scheme was enjoyed by only the upper 20 percent of Manila's business taxpayers, a population of some 8,000 businesses.

To foster an even more conducive environment for business in Manila, the city's Business Promotions and Development Office (BPDO) expanded the system this year to all businesses in the city, numbering roughly 50,000.

Under the streamlined system, a business firm would only have to follow three steps: application, fee assessment, then payment.

Once a business owner completes the procedure, the BPDO readily issues the business permit.

Last year, business permit applications or renewals required business owners to submit documents such as a certification from the Department of Trade and Industry, previous receipts and permits, barangay clearance and documents pertaining to their insurance policies.

Establishments also had to undergo inspections, a gold mine for corrupt inspectors that used the procedure as an opportunity to earn money on the side.

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QC street: 2 killings in 7 hours

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

CROSSING this street? Be careful.

Two men were stabbed dead in separate incidents the other night and early yesterday morning while they were on Don Villareal Street in Barangay Gulod, Novaliches, Quezon City.

Michael Angelo Dumlao, 19, was walking on the narrow street at about 8:30 p.m. Saturday when attacked by a lone suspect.

He had just come from school and was on his way home.

The suspect pulled out a knife and demanded Dumlao's wristwatch, wallet and bag, the Central Police District reported yesterday.

When Dumlao resisted, the robber stabbed him in the right side of his body.

Dumlao managed to go to the Novaliches Hospital, police said. But he died while undergoing treatment.

Seven hours later, construction worker Arthur Siose, 34, was stabbed dead by a group of men.

Police said Siose had just stepped out of the gate of his house on Don Villareal at about 3 a.m. yesterday when a group of five men attacked him.

One of the men stabbed the victim in his left chest.

Siose was brought to the Novaliches Hospital where he was declared dead on arrival, police said.

Sergio Palisoc, a security officer in Barangay Gulod, told the INQUIRER that the street had become notorious for robbery incidents.

He said that various gangs also frequent the area.

Needy cabbie returns reporter's valuables

By Irene C. Perez

COMING back to her office on a Saturday night after a coverage in The Fort, Taguig City, INQUIRER Lifestyle reporter Cheche V. Moral noticed that her bag was somehow lighter.

Alarmed, she checked her stuff and panicked when she realized that she left her branded purse containing some P1,300 cash, identification cards, ATM card and credit cards in the cab she took from Taguig.

Thirty minutes later, a man of medium height and in his 50s knocked on the INQUIRER office and returned Moral's wallet.

Taxi driver Expedito Cantero refused to take the money Moral was offering as a reward, but later gave in.

He reasoned that he did not have a regular job and his children could sure use it.

Cantero, a former seaman, currently earns a living as a stand-in driver for Six Brothers Taxi company and only gets to work when one of the regulars cannot make it.

Another envelope found

"A few days after I returned that wallet, I found an envelope containing documents and some letters from abroad in my taxi and surrendered it to my operator," he said in Filipino.

His is another tale of a former overseas Filipino worker who is in the ranks of the unemployed today.

Cantero, in an interview yesterday, said he assumed a sundry of jobs in his 11 years in Libya, where he spent three of those years as an illegal alien or, in streetspeak, a TNT (*tago nang tago*).

He started off as a construction worker for a Danish employer in Libya in the late '80s, Cantero said. There, he met a Filipino nurse who later became his wife. But upon giving birth to their eldest and then a pair of twins, his wife succumbed to ovarian cancer.

From construction, his interest shifted to food while helping out in a catering gig in Libya.

He attended cooking classes in the Philippines, and later served as a cook for a ship tanker. His contract expired in 2001.

He has been without a steady job since.

Twins stopped schooling

"My 16-year-old twins have stopped going to school. They said they want to work for a fast-food outlet in Bohol but I wouldn't allow them," Cantero said in Filipino.

His eldest son also works as a driver.

He has a year-old baby with his second wife, a 29-year-old saleslady.

"*Mahirap tumanda mag-isa* (It's hard to grow old alone)," Cantero said, adding that his baby has not been baptized yet because they lacked money.

It's tough to find a job nowadays, Cantero said. While his three children by his first wife are in Bohol and his new family is in Negros Occidental, the 53-year-old driver chose to stay in Manila waiting for replies from companies he applied with.

"I want to be a seaman-chef," he said with an excited tone, "Specialty *ko yung mga pagkain ng mga puti* (I specialize in European dishes)."

But for now, Cantero said he just wanted a regular cab to drive, saying the units he drives around the metro are not too attractive to passengers.

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Bank rob foiled

THE RIZAL police said it foiled yesterday a bank robbery in Rodriguez, Rizal. Police collared two men allegedly trying to pry open the roof and ceiling of the RCBC branch in the town. The suspects were cornered at dawn when the bank alarm went off, according to Sr. Supt. Leocadio Santiago, Rizal Police chief. *Luige A. del Puerto*

Death in tunnel

MARK Ian Raceles, 23, died when his motorcycle slipped and fell while cruising through the Ayala tunnel on Edsa at about 4:30 a.m. yesterday. Police said after the fall, Raceles, an employee of Grolier International in Makati City was run over by another vehicle that was following closely behind him. The victim, who lived in Taguig City, reportedly came from Quezon City. The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority said the bike of Raceles could have slipped on sand that littered the tunnel. *Irene C. Perez*

Cop kills robbers

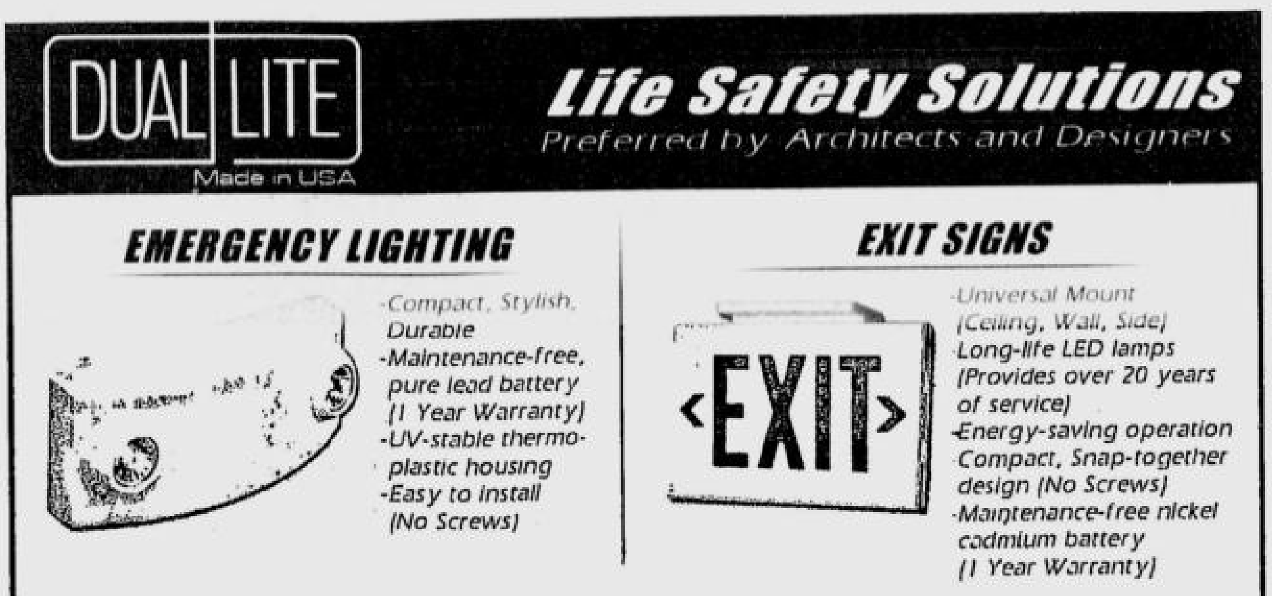
A POLICEMAN shot and killed two alleged holdup men on Road 10, Tondo, Manila, Saturday night. Investigators said three suspects robbed the passengers of a jeepney at about 9:30 p.m. Among the victims was PO3 Joel Borda of the Northern Police District. After the robbery, Borda pursued the suspects. A shoot-out ensued and resulted in the death of suspects Ricardo Crisostomo and Nelsonario Abalos, police said. The third suspect managed to flee. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

MCS homecoming

THE MALATE Catholic School is holding its 88th foundation anniversary with an Alumni Week that begins today and runs up to Feb. 4. The grand homecoming will be on Feb. 5. The inaugural ceremony will be this afternoon at 4 p.m. at the MCS boys campus. For details, call Grace or Tony at telefax 521-1451 or 0916-3165692; Nina Serrano at 0917-8910457; or Muji Tong at 0917-8468362.

Letran assembly

COLLEGIO de San Juan de Letran elementary Batch '76 and high school batch '80 will hold its general assembly on Feb. 5 at the Letran campus in Intramuros. For inquiries, call Atty. Angelo Medina at 632-8638 or 0917-8143682; or John Cuenco at 912-5857 or 0922-8936127.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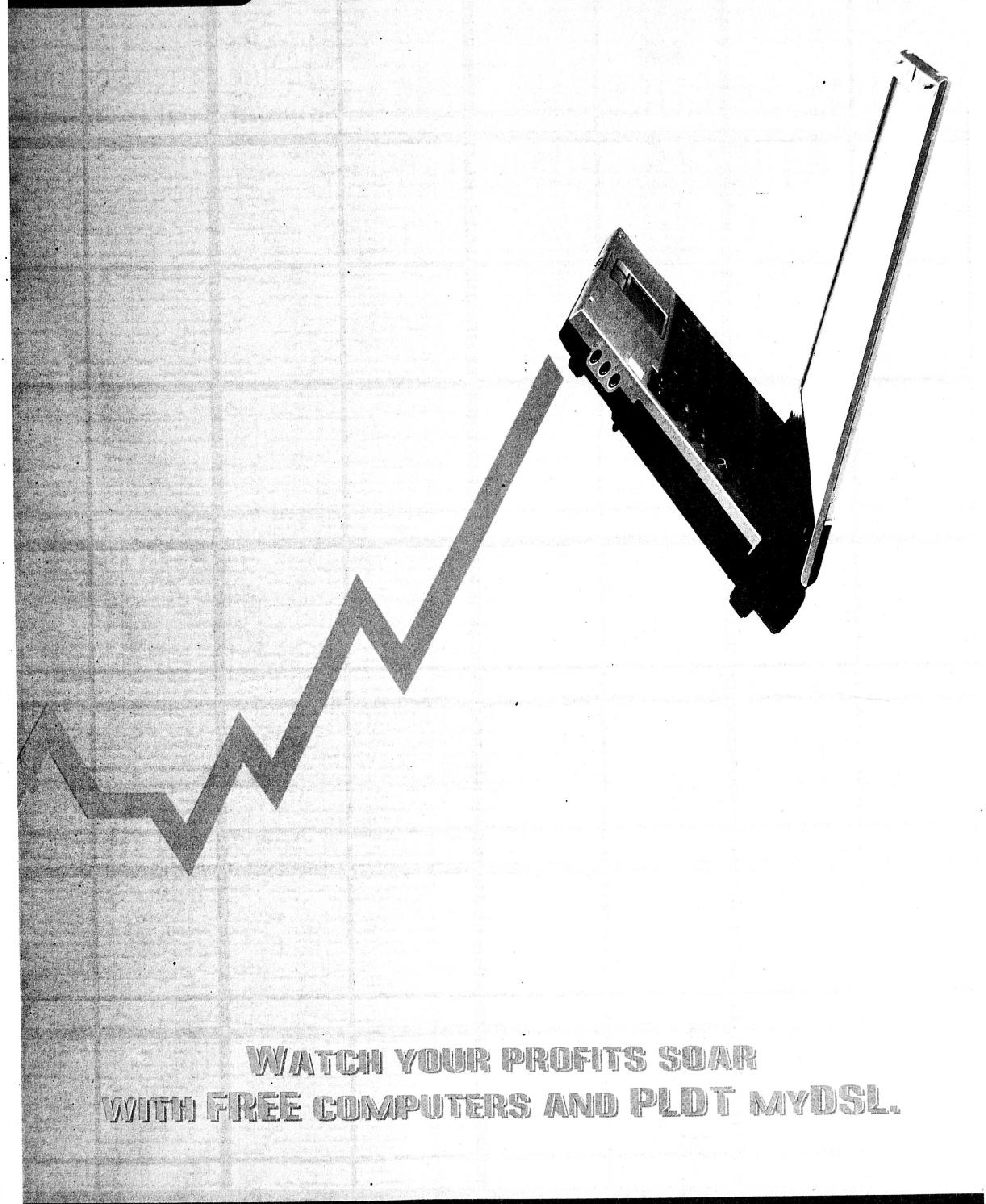
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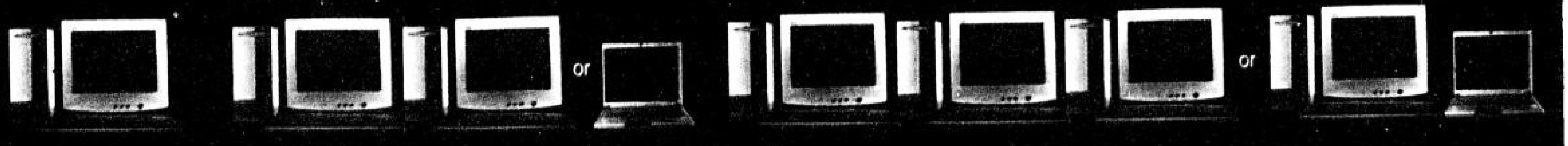

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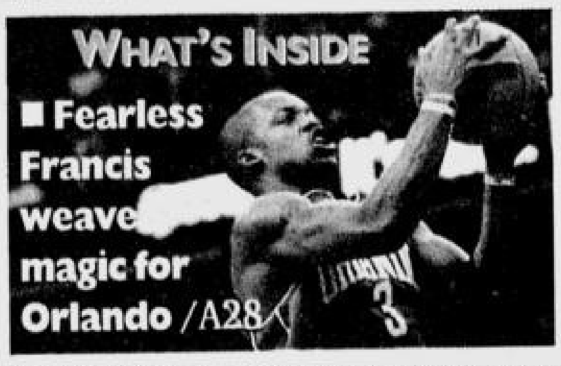
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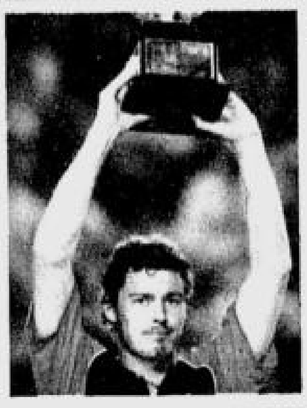
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PBA commish gets veiled threats

Ginebra set to protest Taulava's Game 1 stint

By June Navarro

EALA PDI PHOTO

NOLI Eala has received veiled threats as a result of the Asi Taulava case, forcing him to consider quitting his job as commissioner of the Philippine Basketball Association.

Eala said he got a phone call from an emissary the other day asking him to allow the Talk 'N Text slotman to see action against the Barangay Ginebra Kings in yesterday's Game 1 of the best-of-seven PBA Philippine Cup Finals.

"Somebody just asked me to relay to you this message: Can you make sure Asi (Taulava) plays tomorrow (yesterday)," Eala quoted the unknown messenger as saying.

Apart from the mysterious caller, Eala's family also received an unsigned letter urging the commissioner not to prevent Taulava from suiting up for the Phone Pals.

"I denounce this kind of move and I will not cave in to the pressure. I hope this will stop," said Eala, stressing that he's not pointing a finger at anyone.

But since the controversy has now seriously affected the safety of his family, Eala said he has been thinking long and hard whether to continue as the top honcho of the first play-for-pay league in Asia.

"It is a concern. I lost a couple of hours of sleep and I'm seriously considering quitting the job," said Eala.

"It is not part of the job description," he added.

With Taulava getting the green light from Talk 'N Text management to play, Barangay Ginebra officials are dead-set on filing a protest, which, Eala said, should be formalized right after Game 1 of the Finals.

He added that the moment Taulava steps on the hardcourt on a Talk 'N Text uniform, the opener of the championship series would be rendered unofficial.

Under PBA rules, if an ineligible player suits up and is eventually fielded in, the game will automatically be nullified. The commissioner could either replay the match or forfeit the game altogether.

"We will not do anything to restrain Asi (Taulava) from playing. But as an ineligible player, various violations will be committed by the franchise," said Eala, explaining that sanctions will come in the form of penalties or forfeiture of TV rights.

On the PBA's appeal to reverse the Quezon City Regional Trial Court's order to lift the suspension on Taulava, Eala said a hearing is already set tomorrow which he hopes would finally settle the controversy.

In another development, the initial lineup of the RP men's team composed of PBA stars will be known within the week when head coach Chot Reyes returns from his South Korea-China sojourn.

The 40 players who made the aspirants' list will undergo scrimmage after which Reyes is expected to name the 12 members of the national team.

Meanwhile, Dondon Hontiveros and Nic Belasco sparkled as San Miguel Beer clinched its 14th third-place trophy after downing Shell, 105-100, in the curtain-raiser.

Tolentino slates cycling in Tagaytay

TWO EXCITING cycling races—road and mountain bike—are scheduled during Tagaytay City's Pista ng Pag-ibig set Feb. 12 to 14, according to Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino.

Slated on Feb. 12 are the Tagaytay Mountain Bike Challenge and the Tagaytay Eagle of the Mountain Road Bike Challenge which, according to Tolentino, are expected to lure national riders preparing for the 23rd Southeast Asian Games. The races will be supervised by the Philippine National Cycling Association headed by Paquito Rivas.

Tagaytay City, through Mayor Tolentino, has expressed keen interest in hosting the road race events of the SEA Games in November, prompting officials of the PhilCycling, the national federation of the sport, to strongly consider the picturesque city over Subic.

Tagaytay City's mountainous terrain proves an advantage for the national riders and Tolentino said he welcomes hosting the SEA Games road events.

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

FOOTBALL: EPL-Arsenal vs Manchester United; tomorrow at 3:55 a.m.; ESPN—England's bitter football rivals renew acquaintances at Old Trafford.

BASKETBALL: US NCAA-Missouri vs Kansas; 8 a.m. (r-9:30 p.m.); Providence vs Pittsburgh; 10 a.m.; Iowa vs Indiana; 4 p.m. (r); ESPN—The Tigers take on the Jayhawks while the Friars face the Panthers and the Hawkeyes battle the Hoosiers. NBA-Grizzlies vs Hornets; 9 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); Solar Sports—Southwest Division rivals Memphis and New Orleans clash in the Big Easy.

TENNIS: 2004 Australian Open; Men's Singles Finals; 9:30 p.m.; STAR Sports—Get another look at the men's championship match.

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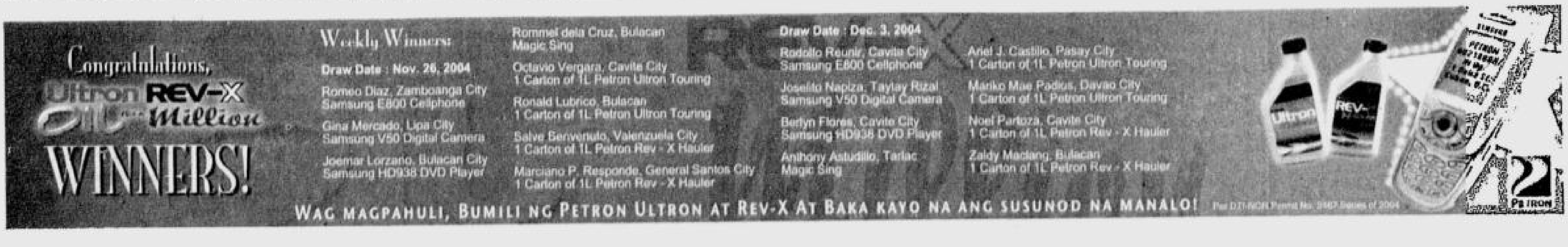
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Ronald Lubrico, Bulacan 1 Carton of 1L Petron Ultron Touring
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Marciano P. Responde, General Santos City 1 Carton of 1L Petron Rev - X Hauler
Draw Date : Dec. 3, 2004
Rodolfo Reunir, Cavite City Samsung E800 Cellphone
Joselito Napiza, Taytay Rizal Samsung V50 Digital Camera
Berlyn Flores, Cavite City Samsung HD938 DVD Player
Anthony Astudillo, Tarlac Magic Sing
Ariel J. Castillo, Pasay City 1 Carton of 1L Petron Ultron Touring
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PETRON

Top karter eyes tougher challenges for 2005

MATTEO Fernan Guidicelli, the Philippine Sportswriters Association (PSA) Karter of the Year awardee, looks forward to another fruitful season as he tackles bigger and tougher challenges this year.

Supported by Penshoppe, Swatch and Addict Mobile Prepaid, Guidicelli hopes to make it big internationally as he competes in 14 races abroad.

"To be feted by the local sports media is a distinct honor. I know it's harder to stay on top than climbing to the top. But I'll try my best to make it big internationally and show the world-class talent of Filipinos," said Guidicelli, who made karting history by clinching two titles in a single season.

He's also a strong candidate for the prestigious second Golden Wheel Award—the award-giving body for top motorsports achievers—set Feb. 9 at the Manila Polo Club.

After claiming the Cadet 85 crown two years ago, Guidicelli captured both the premiere Intercontinental-A class and the Rotax Max Junior plums last season.

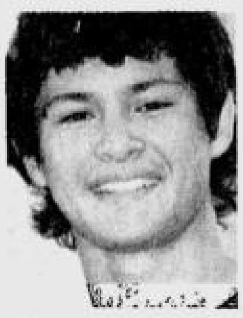
This year, he'll go all out for the Asian Karter of the Year award in the 2005 Asian Zone Open Karting Championship which will kick off April 21-24 in Malaysia. The Philippines will host the second leg tentatively set June 9-12 while the other legs will be staged in Indonesia, Thailand and Macau.

Guidicelli is also set to compete in two prestigious karting championships in Italy—the five-leg Italian Open Master Championship 2005 and the Gara Nazionale championship.

Later this year, he will also test his skills against Asia's karting champions in the CIK-FIA Asia-Pacific Championship Suzuka Japan in November.

Among others, Guidicelli will also begin testing formula cars and may even race a few events and vie to earn a seat in a fully sponsored Team as he plans to join the Formula Renault or Formula BMW in 2006.

"It's every racer's dream to make it big in world formula racing, and with the continued support of the local media and race fans, hopefully I'll make it among the first of the new generation Filipino racers to barge into the international scene," Guidicelli added.



GUIDICELLI: Karter of the Year PDI PHOTO

De La Salle tops semis; Letran in

GAMES THURSDAY (*Rizal Coliseum*)
3 p.m.—La Salle vs Letran
5 p.m.—UST vs PSC

By Musong R. Castillo

LA SALLE clinched top seeding in the Shakey's V-League semifinals, humbling the PSC Lady Legends, 25-13, 25-11, 22-25, 25-14, at the close of the eliminations yesterday at the Rizal Coliseum.

The Lady Archers won for the 11th straight time since bowing to Santo Tomas in the inaugurals last November.

They will play the Letran Lady Knights in the best-of-three semifinals starting Thursday, while the Legends got the team they were asking for right from the start—the Tigresses in the other semis pairing.

Santo Tomas, the defending champion, actually closed out with a similar 11-1 slate like La Salle, but lost out in the tiebreak by losing more sets.

Letran booked the last Final Four seat earlier by outlasting Lyceum, 25-14, 25-22, 22-25, 25-20.

The Lady Knights got back at their first-round tormentors in what could be the most important game for them to join the fancied teams in the semis and be counted as one of the country's elite collegiate teams.

Cherry Rose Macatangay came through with a tournament-best 32 points, all but two on kills, while Dianne Diaz anchored Letran's defense with six points coming from blocks. Diaz finished with 12.

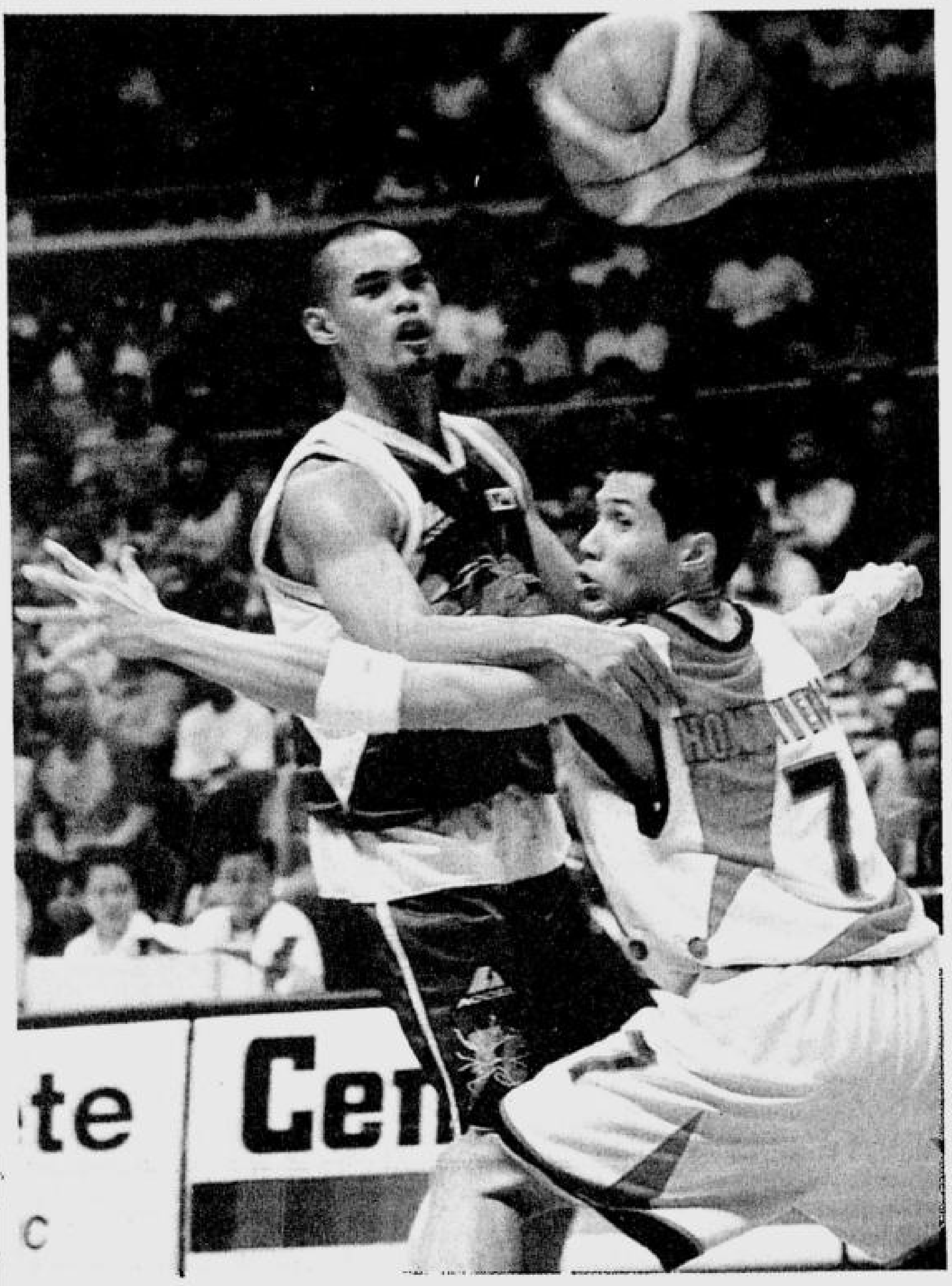
Joan Carpio, Zheena de la Cuesta and Bangladesh Pantaleon also combined for 24 points for the Lady Knights.

Letran wound up with a 6-6 card while Lyceum finished with a 4-8 tally for fifth place.

San Sebastian and Far Eastern finished tied for last place in the event co-presented by Dunkin Donuts, HBC Home of Beauty of Exclusives, Smart and PLDT with Mikasa and Accel as official volleyball and outfitter, respectively.

The Lady Knights opened up hot to win the first two sets.

Behind Michelle Laborte and Beverly Boto, Lyceum extended the match to a fourth set but could not hold off elimination further with Macatangay scoring at will.



NO GO
Dondon Hontiveros of San Miguel Beer stops Ronald Tubid of Shell from recovering the loose ball in their clash for third place in the PBA Philippine Cup last night. The Beermen won, 105-100. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

PBA title tickets up at Ever Mall Tour

TO SPICE up interest in the PBA Timeout@Ever Malls, organizers of the interactive mall tour is putting up a unique raffle promo where PBA fans could win two tickets in the ongoing PBA championship between Ginebra and Talk 'N Text, PBA jerseys and a rare chance to date their favorite PBA cagers.

Chi Arao, ad and promo manager of Ever Malls, said a minimum purchase of P300 (single or accumulated) from participating stores at Ever malls will entitle a customer to one raffle coupon. Aside from the PBA finals tickets and jerseys, other prizes are bleacher seat tickets and round-neck PBA shirts.

Win a date

Designated boxes are located at the supermarket area of Ever Grand Central, main entrance of Ever Ortigas and at the upper ground level of Ever Commonwealth. A separate drop box for ladies aged 16 to 35 is made available for a chance to win a date with one of the PBA Stars.

Promo starts tomorrow (Feb. 1) with deadline for submission of entries set Feb 23. The draw will be held Feb. 26 at 5 p.m. at the Mall Atrium of Ever Ortigas.

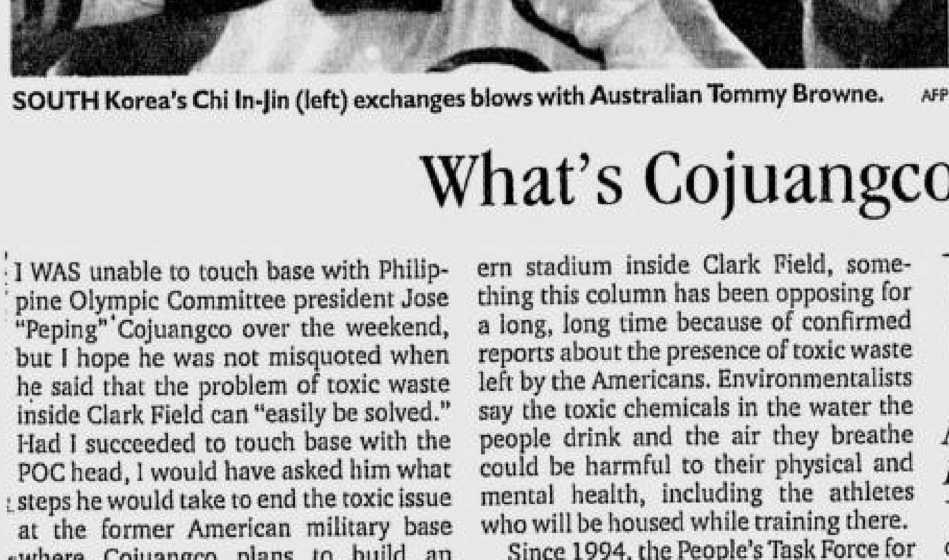
Meantime, the PBA Timeout@Ever Malls winds up its exhibit at Ever Grand Central today with Ever Commonwealth hosting the next stop on Feb. 1-15. The pro league, in cooperation with Ever Malls, has lined up a series of sports activities at the various Ever-Gotesco malls to give its legions of fans the chance to interact with their favorite players and teams outside of the playing venue.

Mingle with fans

The Talk 'N Text Phone Pals will grace the event on Feb. 3 while the San Miguel Beermen take their turn on Feb. 5. The Shell Turbo Chargers will mingle with their fans on Feb. 10 while Purefoods will have its team day on Feb. 12.

The mall tour ends Feb. 16-28 at Ever-Ortigas with the Ginebra Kings meeting their fans on Feb. 19 and the Sta. Lucia Realtors on Feb. 24. Red Bull will have its team marketing day on Feb. 26.

Korean Chi keeps WBC feather crown



SOUTH Korea's Chi In-Jin (left) exchanges blows with Australian Tommy Browne. AFP

SEOUL—South Korea's world featherweight champion, Chi In-Jin, routed Australia's Tommy Browne to defend his World Boxing Council title for the second time on Sunday.

Chi, 31, won a 3-0 victory over Browne, 21, after dominating the entire 12-round bout at the Seoul Grand Hilton Hotel.

"I was confident of my victory from the beginning of today's match. I wanted a knock-out win over him but the partner was too defense-oriented," Chi told Yonhap news agency.

Chi, South Korea's sole professional boxing champion, won the WBC title in April. He defended it in July by knocking out Japan's Eiichi Sugama.

The Korean was reported to be a possible opponent of Filipino champion Manny Pacquiao last year.

Meanwhile in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, Puerto Rican Nelson Dieppa retained his WBO junior flyweight title in a savage fight with an 11th round knockout of compatriot Alex Sanchez.

Dieppa landed a right cross to Sanchez's jaw with 2:15 remaining in the 11th that sent his opponent to the canvas.

Sanchez remained motionless in the floor for more than 15 minutes, and was taken from the ring in a stretcher with a neckbrace and oxygen mask.

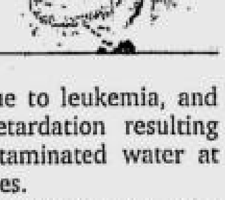
The fighter raised both arms as he was being taken out of the ring, drawing applause from the fans.

Both fighters exchanged heavy blows throughout the first 10 rounds, with the champion dominating the first half of the fight with his jab and height advantage. Sanchez, a former WBO champion, was winning the second half with heavy body blows.

Dieppa improved to 22-1-2, with 13 KOs, and Sanchez is 31-5-1. *AFP, AP*

What's Cojuangco's solution to Clark toxic issue?

CLEAN LIVING



Manolo R. Iñigo

I WAS unable to touch base with Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco over the weekend, but I hope he was not misquoted when he said that the problem of toxic waste inside Clark Field can "easily be solved." Had I succeeded to touch base with the POC head, I would have asked him what steps he would take to end the toxic issue at the former American military base where Cojuangco plans to build an Olympic standard stadium.

"Building that modern stadium will be a top priority in my four-year term," said the 70-year-old Cojuangco, who added that he is set to meet soon with officials of the Clark Development Authority and discuss his proposed plan to build a world-class stadium inside the vast former US military base. "There is a vital need to provide our athletes with a modern, complete and international standard stadium where they can train properly to achieve their dream of winning that elusive Olympic gold."

But in my view, Cojuangco is ill-advised to pursue his plan to build a modern stadium inside Clark Field, something this column has been opposing for a long, long time because of confirmed reports about the presence of toxic waste left by the Americans. Environmentalists say the toxic chemicals in the water the people drink and the air they breathe could be harmful to their physical and mental health, including the athletes who will be housed while training there.

Since 1994, the People's Task Force for Bases Cleanup has been asking the US government to remove the toxic wastes left by their soldiers in Subic Bay and Clark Field. Von Hernandez, People's Task Force chair and Greenpeace Asia toxic campaign coordinator, said recently that President Macapagal-Arroyo should ask US President George W. Bush for a total cleanup of these military bases in order to preserve the bond of friendship between these two allies. Also, Myrla Baldonado of the Alliance of the Bases Cleanup (ABC) and lawyer Eric Mallonga of Amade Philippines (Philippine Association of Children's Friends) said more than 300 people, most of them children, have died due to leukemia, and suffered mental retardation resulting from drinking contaminated water at these former US bases.

Princess Caroline of Hanover, who came here for a short visit last year as president of Amade Mondiale, had been informed again of the tragic condition of Filipino toxic waste victims. The Princess had earlier bemoaned the failure of the US military to remove the dangerous toxic waste before it left the country in 1991. In a letter, Princess Caroline had asked Mr. Bush "to expedite the necessary countermeasures to redress this critical situation." But up to now, Filipino toxic waste victims could only wait and worry.

Even former Presidents Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada had raised the toxic waste problem with their US counterparts but they accomplished nothing. American officials claimed the 1947 Philippines-US military bases agreement did not require environmental remediation, including cleaning up the toxic wastes and providing compensation and medical treatment for affected residents.

Incidentally, I would like to salute President Arroyo for directing POC chief Peping Cojuangco to transfer the training of the national athletes from the aging Rizal Memorial Sports Complex in polluted and crowded Manila to the Teachers Camp in Baguio City. Clark Field was an original choice to be the national training center, but the plan was shelved [because the toxic waste issue could be a problem?]

At any rate, Cojuangco said Baguio would be an ideal place for a training center because of its high altitude and isolated location.

***

DON'T DO IT, LUISITO. My heart bleeds for luckless Luisito Espinosa, the former World Boxing Council bantamweight and featherweight champion, who is now based in San Francisco, California.

Now an aging boxer at 37 years old, Espinosa takes on 24-year-old Mexican Martin Honorio in Stockton on Feb. 13.

Methinks, Espinosa need not fight again. But what can he do? He is now forced to continue fighting not only because he needs the money, but also because it is required that he keeps on boxing—his special skill—so that he can prolong his stay in the United States and acquire that elusive green card. The last time Espinosa fought a younger opponent, he lost badly to Carlos Navarro, also of Mexico, in a 10-round bout in Reno last year.

Once managed by broadcaster Hermie Rivera, the present hardship which has befallen Luisito Espinosa is truly appalling, if not outright shameful. Now in dire need of cash, Espinosa has to risk life and limb every time he climbs atop the ring. What a pity.

Briton wins Caltex tilt, Que falters

SINGAPORE—England's Nick Dougherty carded a five-under 67 on Sunday, cruising to a five-shot victory in the Singapore Masters to earn his maiden Tour success.

Dougherty, 22, finished with an 18-under par total at the Laguna National course, completing his final round with a superb birdie in the last hole.

Scotland's Colin Montgomerie, the defending champion, bogeyed two of his closing three holes in a round of 70 to finish second at 13-under, tied with Dutchman Maarten Lafeber.

Denmark's Thomas Bjorn, who recorded a double bogey on the 17th, finished fourth with a 277 total after a round of 72.

Filipino Angelo Que floundered with a final day 74 to wind up in three-way tie for 17th spot with a 284 total.

The reigning Vietnam Carlsberg Masters champion had two double bogeys in the front nine that offset four birdies, before carding two more bogeys coming home.

The 26-year-old dropped out of the top 10, a place where he was after turning in 70s in each of the first three rounds.

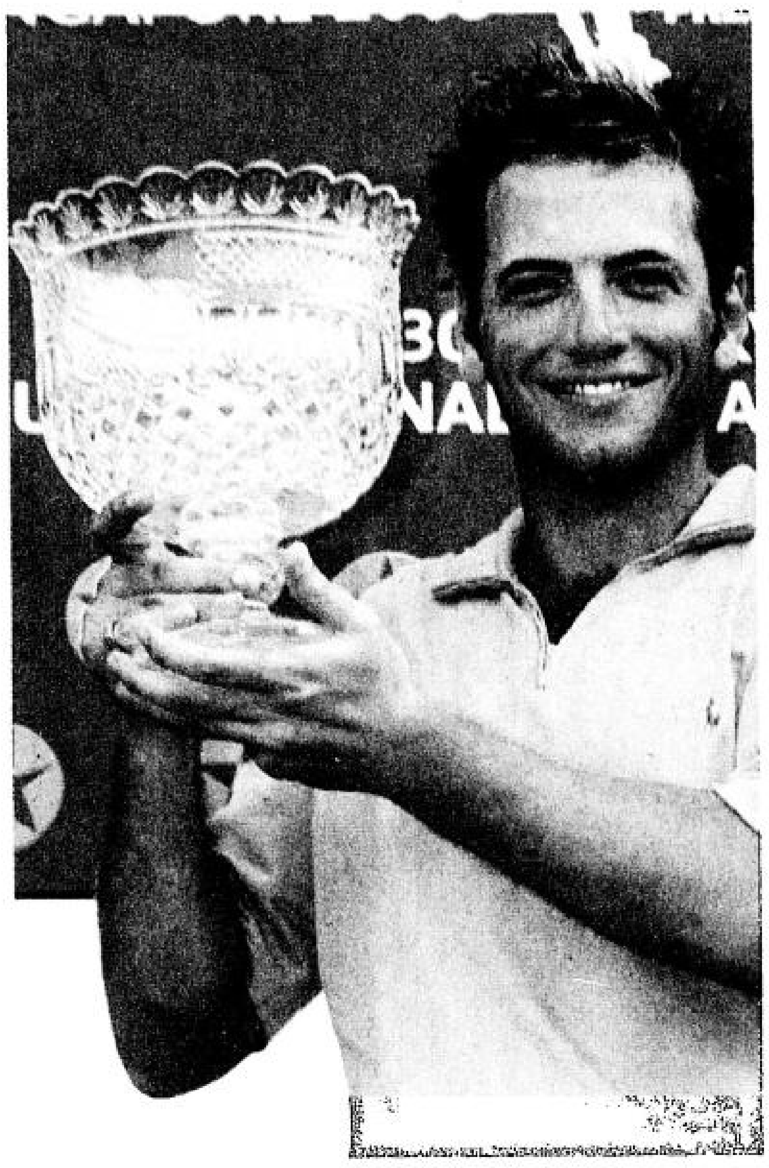
Que wound up tied with Denmark's Soren Hansen (76) and Irishman Graeme McDowell (72).

Dougherty was delighted with his victory, which came just a week after finishing fourth in the South African Open.

He took the lead with an eagle on the 15th hole in the second round and never relinquished his position.

"I am honestly delighted," Dougherty said. "The win hasn't quite sunk in yet. When you are playing with players like Colin (Montgomerie) and Thomas (Bjorn), you really don't think it's over till it's over.

"Hopefully, this is the start of many great things, and I am very, very pleased that I have won here in a very great place." *Reuters*



DOUGHERTY holds up the championship trophy after winning the Caltex Masters. AFP

SPORTSWATCH

Roligon Anniversary derby resumes

AS A special anniversary treat, ticket prices have been lowered to P200 for general admission and P300 for ringside seats for the duration of the ongoing P4-million Roligon 15th Anniversary 7-Cock Derby. The second of the four-day eliminations is up today with 98 matches lined up starting at 3 p.m. Winning three of three matches in last Saturday's opener are Surefire–Boyet Plaza, Super Win Sundance–Rep. Ronnie Puno 1975–Neil Acebedo, Alexander II–Alex Bauan, AA-LDS of Marianito Aguisanda, Bistro Princess Ara–Boyet Catibog, JU Ratratan–Arthur Mangulabnan, Class B–Danny Polo, Brother–Abraham Bernales, Saba Hermosa– Luis Villa and EYB Air Assault France–Ampil and Baccud brothers.

Milo Cebu junior tennis winners

CEBU—Jacob Lagman blanked Nino Baylosis, 6-0, 6-0, and John Marie Gelbolingo ousted Crisianne Kintanar, 6-3, 6-2, to kick off the 2005 season of the Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop at the Cebu Country Club clay courts Saturday. Lagman and Gelbolingo advanced in the unisex 10-under division together with boys' 12-under campaigners Nico Ritz Remonde and Christian Cabahug, who downed John Israel, 5-7, 7-5, 9-7, and Joseph Tallo, 6-3, 6-0, respectively. In the boys' 14-under bracket, Jayvee Canoy whipped Lowell Canete, 6-4, 6-3, while Rionel Vallar edged Jess Espinosa, 6-1, 6-4. Macy Solon routed Stephanie Vasquez, 6-2, 6-2, in the girls' 18-under.

Chiang Kai Shek five nips Sakya

CHIANG Kai Shek College (CKSC) held back a late rally by Philippine Academy of Sakya to win, 38-35, in the final phase of the elimination round in the 2nd Baden Powell Cup Inter-School Scout Basketball Tournament last Sunday. With a little over one minue to go, Sakya came back from a 10-point deficit to within two, 37-35. However, a split conversion on the charity line coupled by a steal with only five seconds to go assured CKSC of victory. With the win, CKSC enters the semifinal round with a twice-to-beat advantage, where it will meet either defending champion Hope Christian High School or Philadelphia School.

Littaua, former national cager, dies

ATENEO Hall of Famer and former national player Roberto "Bobby" Littaua died of brain tumor at 6:45 p.m. Saturday. He was 69 years old. Littaua played for the Blue Eagles during his college days before he joined another Ateneo ace, Ed Ocampo, as assistant coach in the Micaa and the PBA. He was Ocampo's assistant in Beer Hausen and Pepsi and served as team manager of the Yco team. Before his death, Littaua was the training director of the BEST Center, catering to the development of children basketeers. He left behind his loving wife Winnie Edwards and children Francis (+) and Mara, Edgar, Raoul and Marj, Cookie, Anna and Mike, Bobby and Agnes. His remains lie in state at the Our Lady of Fatima Mortuary in Philamlife Homes, Las Piñas. Interment will be announced later.

dzMM run registration up tomorrow

REGISTRATION for the dzMM "Takbo Para Sa Kalikasan" opens tomorrow at the Race Center at 51 Annapolis St. in Greenhills, San Juan. The center will be from Monday to Sunday and will accept registrants for as long as there are "Takbo Para Sa Kalikasan" T-shirts to issue. Registration hours will start from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Saturday, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Sunday. Registration fees are P150 for the 5K and 10K runs and P100 for the 3K run. The event will be held Feb. 20. The dzMM "Takbo Para Sa Kalikasan" is now on its sixth year and is held in partnership with Nation Petroleum Inc. and Nike. Some 3,000 runners are expected to participate.

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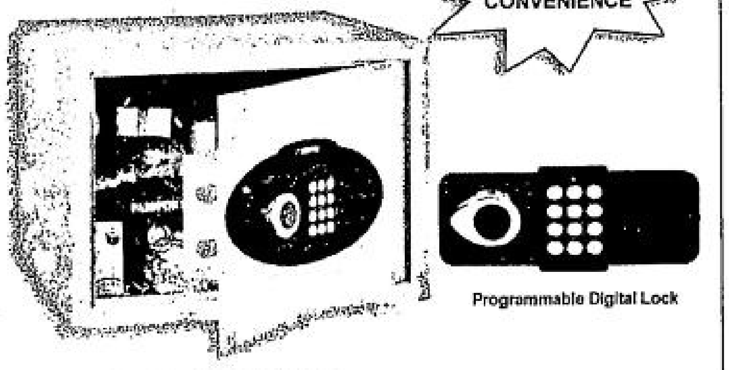

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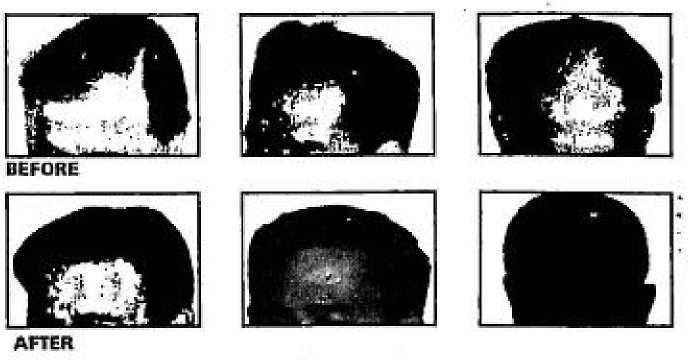

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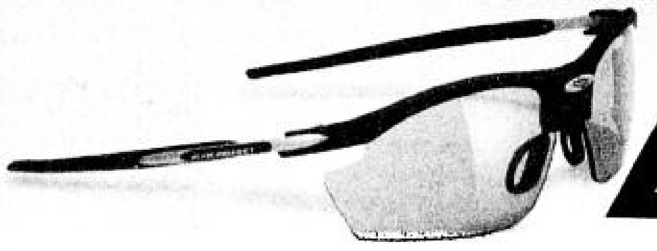

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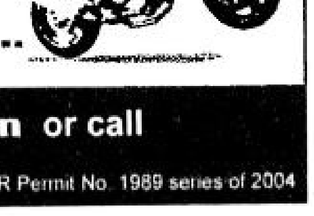

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Gatti retains WBC crown

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey—Arturo Gatti retained his WBC 140-pound title Saturday, stopping "Jesse" James Leija in the fifth round and avoiding the kind of slugfests that have made his career.

Before a sellout crowd that cheered his every move, Gatti landed a hard overhand right on a retreating Leija, knocking him down early in the round. But Leija narrowly beat referee Earl Brown's 10-count and got to his feet just as Brown got to 10.

Gatti then teed off on him after that, finally dropping Leija for good with a left hand to the ear that toppled the former 130-pound (58.5-kg) champion. Leija, of San Antonio, managed to get to his knees but the referee called an end to the fight at 1:48 of the fifth.

The fight set up a possible June bout with unbeaten Floyd Mayweather Jr., that would be the richest of Gatti's career.

Gatti, the old-fashioned brawler who has made a career out of comeback victories and toe-to-toe slugfests, didn't have to reach deep against Leija.

With the crowd of 12,599 on his side, he forced the action from the start, leading with left jabs and making Leija (47-7-2) pay with hard counter punches whenever he attacked.

Leija, who had hoped to use Gatti's punch-trading style against him, connected with a right cross to the head early in the second and later a solid left to Gatti's face as the champion advanced.

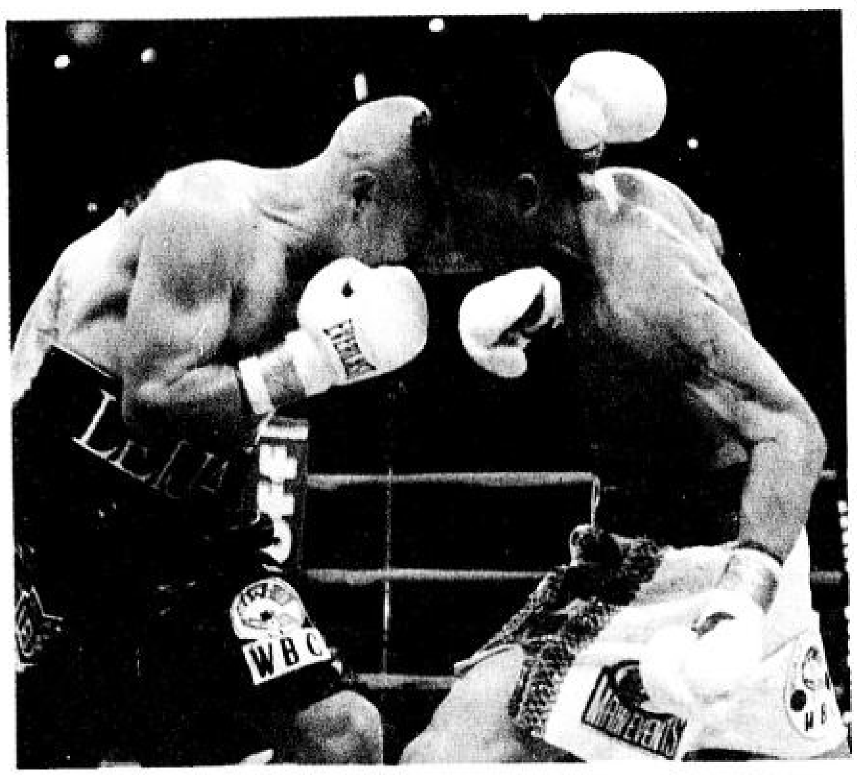
But Gatti (39-6) was never in trouble, and he was never cut as in many of his previous fights.

At the start of the fifth, he attacked quickly after the opening bell, landing a left, another left and then a right to Leija's head, setting the tempo for what was to come.

Once he knocked Leija down, it was just a matter of time. With Leija clearly dazed, Gatti backed him into the ropes and unloaded five punches in a row with no return fire from Leija. Moments later, he caught the reeling Leija with the left hand that finished him.

"I never thought he'd get up after the right hand," said Gatti, who won the WBC crown a year ago in the same arena.

Gatti made $2 million for the second defense of his WBC title. Leija made $700,000. *AP*


WBC Super lightweight champion Arturo Gatti (R) exchanges blows with opponent James Leija in the fourth round in Atlantic City. REUTERS

Racing Woods caddie okay

WELLINGTON, New Zealand—Tiger Woods' New Zealand-born caddie, Steve Williams, was released from a New Zealand hospital Sunday after having surgery on his left hand following a speedway car crash.

Williams gashed his hand to the bone Friday when his modified saloon car flipped and hit a safety wall on the last lap of a dirt-track race at the Baypark Speedway at Tauranga on New Zealand's North Island.

Television footage of the crash showed Williams' car touched another while leading narrowly on the last bend of the race, slid sideways then rolled several times before striking the track's outer fence.

The car was extensively damaged and track officials said Williams was lucky to avoid more serious injury.

Williams, recovering at home Sunday, said he didn't know when he would be able to carry Woods' bag again.

"My hand's going to take a couple of months to heal properly, apparently," he said.

Williams rang Woods at his Orlando, Florida home Friday to tell him of the accident.

"When I called him he said 'you sound a bit groggy,'" Williams said.

"I said 'that's because I'm lying in a hospital bed'.

"He said: 'Don't tell me you had a wreck.'"

Williams, who is left-handed, said Woods offered to send his private plane to New Zealand to pick him up.

Woods, who rallied last week from two shots back to win the Buick Invitational, plays next at the Nissan Open at the Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles beginning Feb. 17. *AP*

Rooney target: 20-goal breach

MANCHESTER, England—Wayne Rooney has set himself a target of 20 goals in his debut season at Manchester United after taking his tally into double figures with a brace in the 3-0 FA Cup fourth round destruction of Middlesbrough at Old Trafford.

The teenage England striker struck two of the sweetest goals seen at the venue for many a year as the holders powered into the last 16 of the competition.

United faces Arsenal on Tuesday in a game which will go a long way to determining who finishes runner-up to run away Premiership leaders Chelsea.

But with Rooney showing the kind of form which helped propel England into the quarterfinals of Euro 2004 last summer, it would take a brave man to rule United out of trophy contention this season.

The 19-year-old took his tally to four goals in his last five appearances—the first from 30 yards and the second from 25 yards—and has 11 in total.

Yet he insists he will not be happy until he has smashed through the 20-goal barrier.

"The most I've scored in the Premiership is nine goals, but I've now got 11 in all competitions which is pleasing," said Rooney.

"Maybe now I can aim for a tally of 20. It would be good if I could achieve that. They were two of the best goals I have scored in my career so far. But the most important thing is that we are through to the fifth round.

"We should have been two or three goals to the good before I scored, but it was a good all round team performance."

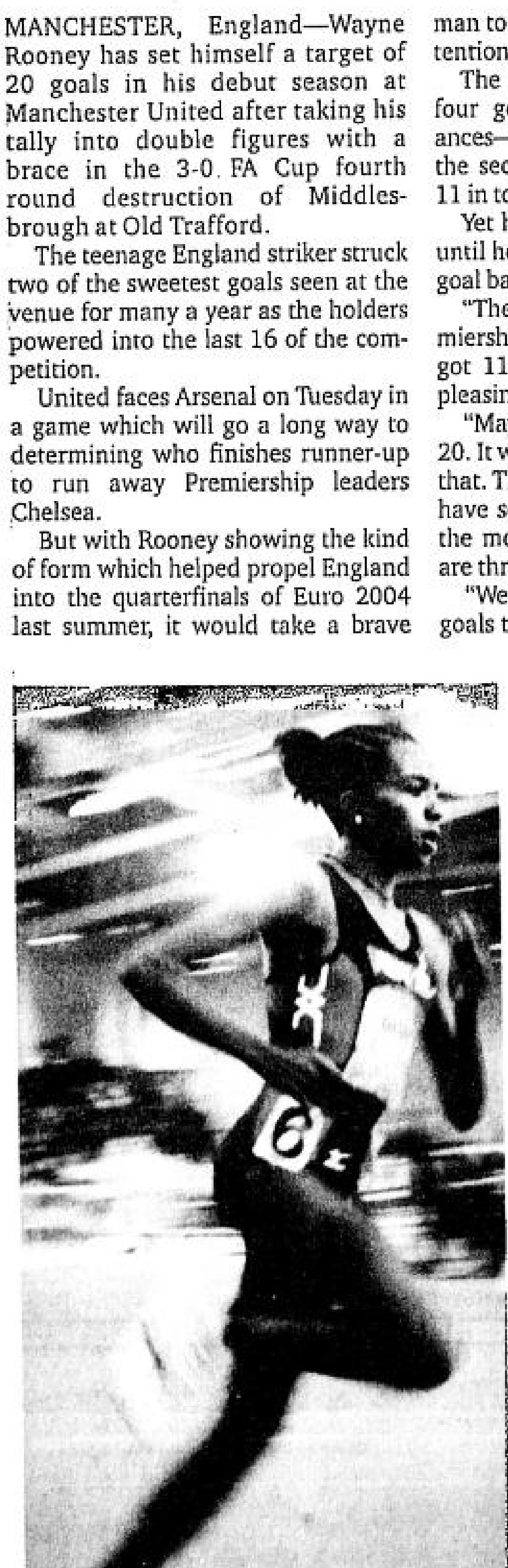
Rooney's double, a sweet lob and a long distance volley, earned him praise from manager Sir Alex Ferguson, who was criticized for leaving Rooney out of his starting line-up during the midweek League Cup semi-final defeat to Chelsea.

"They were two fantastic, incredible goals by Wayne," said Ferguson.

"He produced an absolutely marvellous performance but so did all the team. It was important we didn't sit back and let Middlesbrough settle.

"We were very aggressive. The FA Cup is a special competition and we haven't managed to retain it before. Hopefully we can go all the way."

United, 11-times former winners of the FA Cup, never looked back after taking an early lead through Republic of Ireland defender John O'Shea. *AFP*


TIRUNESH Dibaba of Ethiopia blurs by opponents en route to a world record. REUTERS

'Mental lapse' adds to Bekele heartache

BOSTON—Even a heavy heart could barely slow Ethiopian distance runner Kenenisa Bekele. But a lapse in concentration cost him.

Less than a month after the death of his fiancee, Bekele finished second in the 3,000 meters at Saturday's Reebok Boston Indoor Games at the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center. He was leading when he lost track of the lap count and slowed on the final lap, thinking the race was over.

Bekele finished the race with a time of 7 minutes, 41.42 seconds—less than 2 seconds behind Alistair Cragg of Ireland.

"You could see his heart wasn't in it," Cragg said. "Ninety-nine times out of 100 he would have beaten me."

Bekele, the 2004 Olympic gold medallist in the 10,000 meters and silver medalist in the 5,000, had a comfortable lead after 14 laps.

But after sprinting toward the finish line to close out the 14th lap, Bekele slowed down thinking the race was over. Cragg took advantage and ran away with the win.

"I miscalculated, and that was my undoing," Bakele said through a translator. "It has never happened before."

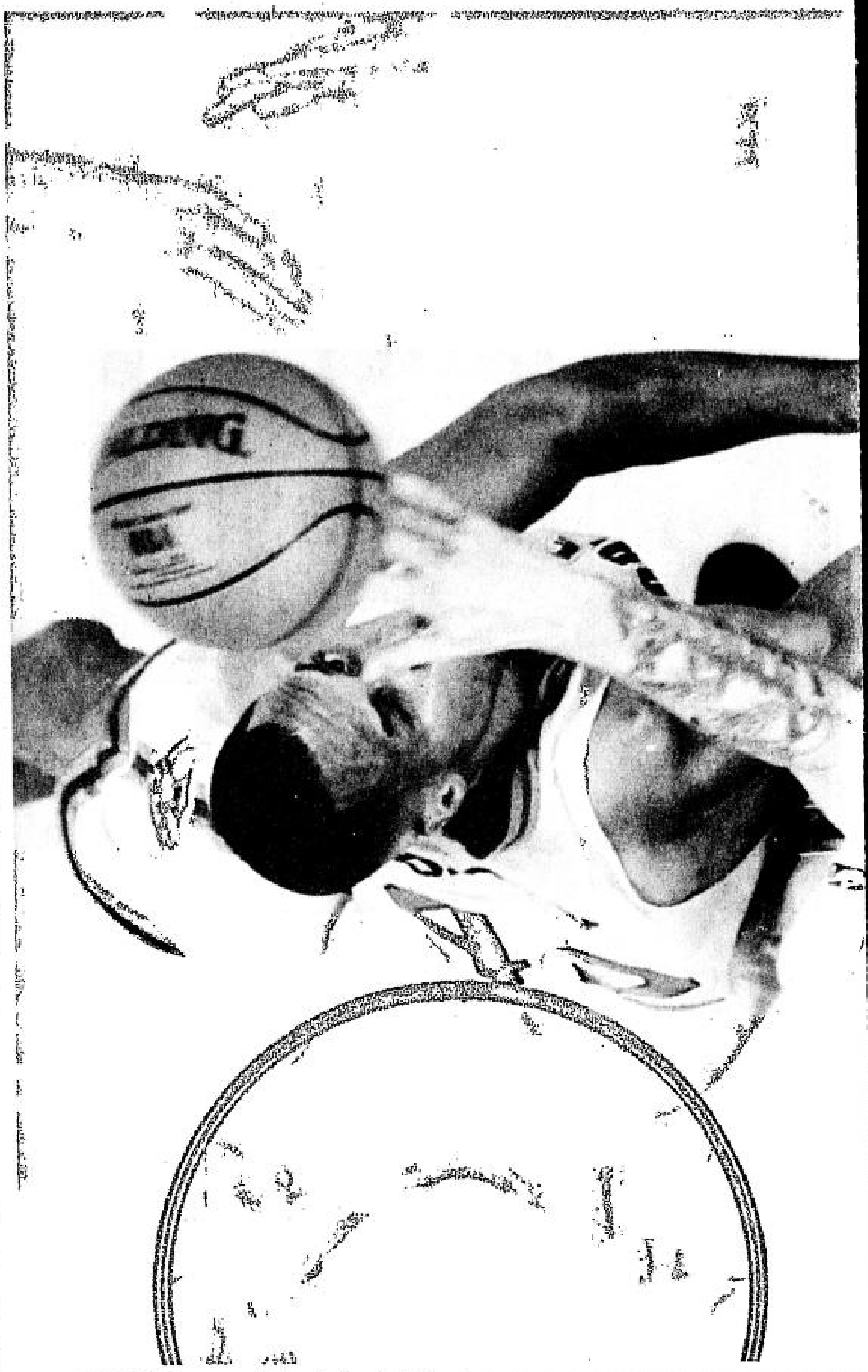
It was Bekele's first competition since Alem Techale's death. Also a world-class runner who won the 2003 World Youth Championship in the 1,500 meters, Techale collapsed and died of an apparent heart attack during a training run with Bekele on Jan. 4. She was 18.

After getting engaged last summer, the two were planning to get married in May. There was a moment of silence in Techale's honor before the race.

Bekele, widely considered the best long-distance runner in the world, spent several weeks mourning her death and was only able to train one week before Saturday's competition.

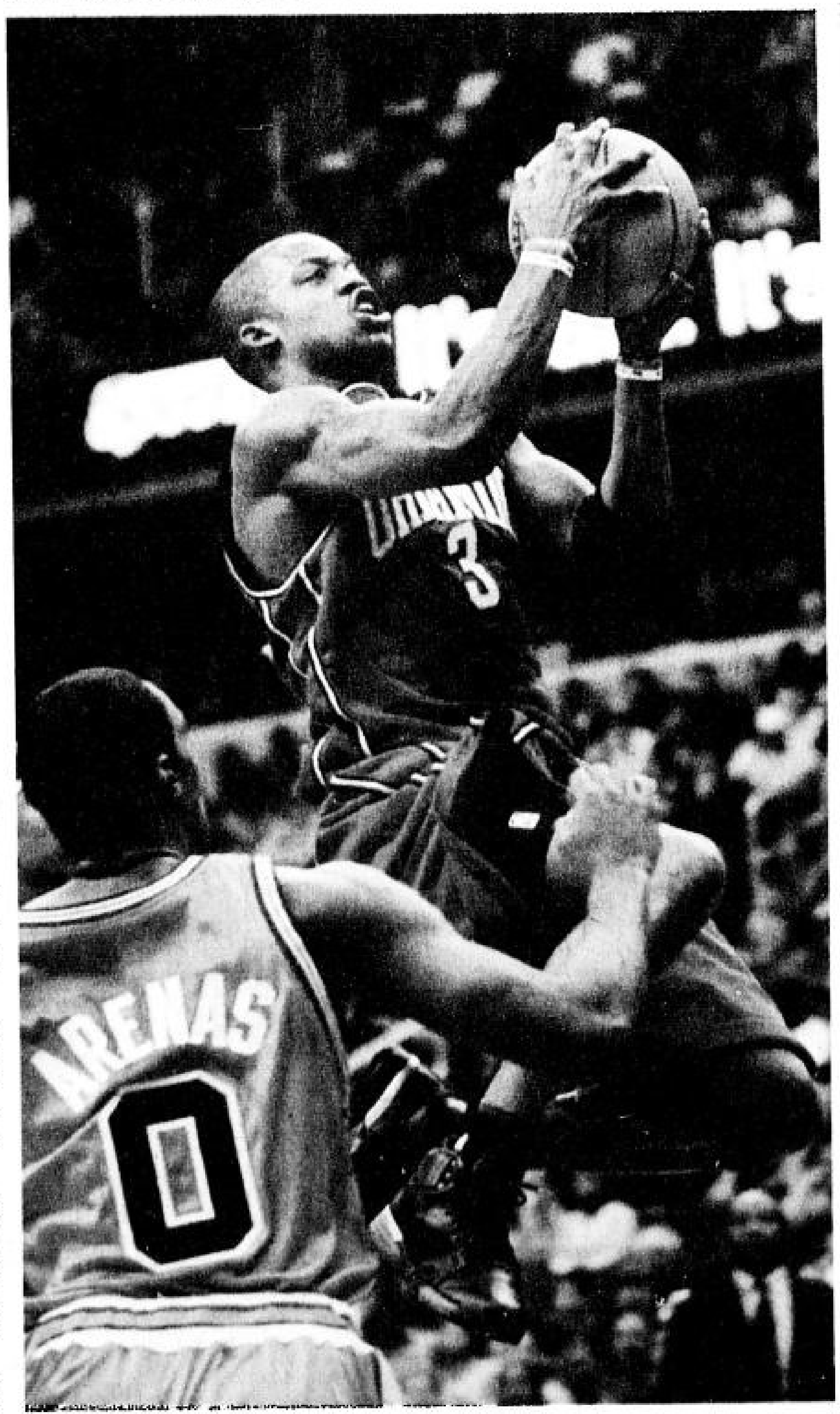
Fellow Ethiopian Tirunesh Dibaba had a triumphant start to the 2005 indoor season. She set a world record in the women's 5,000 with a time of 14:32.93, beating Ethiopian Berhane Adere's year-old record of 14:39.29.

Dibaba, who won a bronze medal at this past Olympics, was awarded a $25,000 bonus for setting a world record. *AP*


SAN ANTONIO Spurs guard Tony Parker finds his path to the basket cut by New Orleans big men PJ

Fearless Franci for Orlando; De

WASHINGTON—Steve Francis scored 32 points, and the Washington Wizards missed crucial free throws down the stretch Saturday to give the Orlando Magic a 103-97 victory and a sweep of back-to-back games between the Southeast Division contenders.


WHEN it comes to crunchtime, Orlando Magic's Steve Francis wants the ball in his hands, like he did against Washington. AP

Francis made
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"He is fearless," O
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After Francis' bas
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Grant Hill added
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Pistons 91, Knick

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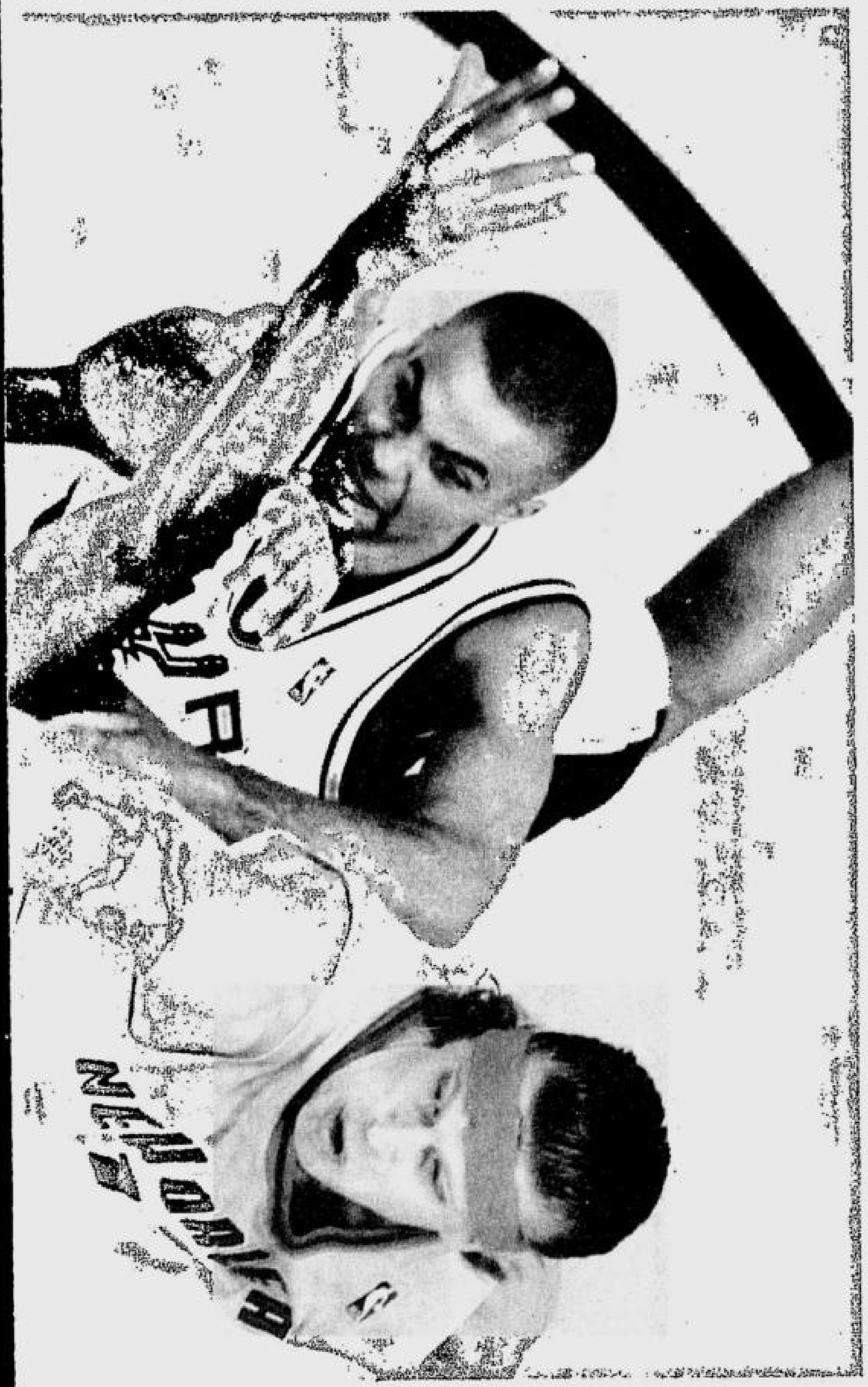

Brown (42) and forward Chris Andersen (12) in the fourth quarter in San Antonio. AP

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an off-balance, er (14-foot) shot to put the Magic was 13-for-26 with ven assists.

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day night's meeting The sweep pulled within two games Wizards, who had 11 of 13 before Fri- Southeast by five

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us low this season s to Boston on Nov. record low is 58.

rs 88

nyon Martin scored ve steals as Denver econd straight win rge Karl. traight loss for the Pacers and their first at home against the Nuggets in 10 years.

Denver won its first game under Karl on Friday night, rallying to win in Milwaukee.

Martin injured his groin in that game and was listed as questionable for Saturday night, but helped the Nuggets get a quick start with 14 points in the first half.

Jermaine O'Neal led the Pacers with 22 points, while Reggie Miller added 15 points.

Carmelo Anthony finished with 15 points and Marcus Camby had 13 for the Nuggets.

Grizzlies 84, Hawks 83

In Memphis, Tennessee, Jason Williams scored 23 points and had eight assists, Mike Miller added 21 points, and Memphis beat travel-weary Atlanta.

Tyronn Lue's fallaway 3-meter (10-foot) shot at the horn for Atlanta bounced off the rim, sending the Hawks to their fourth straight loss.

The Hawks were stranded in Atlanta overnight as icy conditions prevented them from flying out after Friday's loss to Miami. The team arrived at the FedEx Forum with a police escort about 90 minutes before the scheduled start time—an hour later than originally scheduled.

Al Harrington led the Hawks with 18 points and eight rebounds, while Lue and Antoine Walker had 17 points each. Tony Delk scored 15 off the bench.

Nets 99, Jazz 82

In Salt Lake City, Vince Carter made his first five shots on his way to 30 points as New Jersey defeated Utah for a season-high third straight win.

Carter was 5-for-5 from 3-point range and scored on a variety of drives to the basket as New Jersey never trailed. It was Carter's second straight 30-point game.

Jason Kidd scored 19 points and Nenad Krstic added 13 for the Nets, who dressed only nine players on the last game of a five-game road trip. It hardly mattered the way they shot. New Jersey made 9 of 13 from beyond the arc and finished the trip 3-2.

76ers 93, Mavericks 89

In Dallas, John Salmons scored a season-high 19 points and Kyle Korver had 16 as Philadelphia beat Dallas without Allen Iverson.

Iverson, leading the NBA in scoring at 29 per game, missed his third straight game due to a strained left rotator cuff.

The Sixers compensated with solid defense that limited the Mavericks to 36.7 percent field goal shooting (33-for-90).

Dirk Nowitzki led Dallas with 25 points, nine rebounds and a career-high six blocked shots, but he went only 7-for-25 from the floor. Erick Dampier had 14 points, a career-high 26 rebounds and a season-high seven blocked shots for the Mavericks.

Celtics 101, Bulls 97

In Chicago, Ricky Davis scored eight fourth-quarter points to spark a late rally and Gary Payton hit the go-ahead 3-pointer for Boston, which snapped Chicago's five-game winning streak.

The surprising Bulls finished January 13-3, two of the losses to the Celtics.

Davis scored 24 points and Payton had 23. Leading scorer Paul Pierce shot just 2-of-12 from the field but had 18, thanks to a 13-for-17 showing from the free-throw line.

Spurs 93, Hornets 83

In San Antonio, Tony Parker scored 23 points and had 10 assists, and San Antonio improved to 23-1 at home with a win over New Orleans.

The Hornets, sporting the NBA's worst record at 8-35, trailed by only four points after three quarters.

But the Spurs opened the fourth with an 8-0 run as New Orleans missed its first 10 shots.

Manu Ginobili had 17 points and Brent Barry added 14 for San Antonio. Tim Duncan scored 12 points and had 14 rebounds.

Clippers 96, Warriors 85

In Los Angeles, Elton Brand overcame early foul trouble to score 27 points as the Los Angeles Clippers beat Golden State to complete its first season sweep of the Warriors.

Sixth-man Zeljko Rebraka scored 17 of his season-high 19 points in the first half and had a career-high 16 rebounds. Bobby Simmons, who shot only 7-for-26 in his previous game, was 3-for-15 this time and finished with 11 points.

This is the first time the Clippers have swept a season series of four games or more since taking all four from the San Antonio Spurs and Vancouver Grizzlies in 1996-97. *AP*

Ogilvie keeps Hope title bid alive

LA QUINTA, California—Joe Ogilvie turned in a steady if unspectacular round, shooting a 3-under 69 that kept him ahead of the pack at the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic.

Driving more accurately than earlier in the week but leaving some of his irons well short of the pin, Ogilvie still managed an eagle and two birdies on par 5s Saturday at La Quinta Country Club to go to 26-under 262.

Peter Lonard of Australia remained two shots behind after also shooting a 69 during the fourth round of the five-day tournament.

Former British Open champion Justin Leonard was another stroke back after a 64 that left him 23 under. Tim Clark had a 66 and was fourth at 266.

Defending champion Phil Mickelson, who also won the Hope in 2002, had a 68 and was in a group at 268, six shots off the pace.

The 30-year-old Ogilvie, looking for his first tour win, left several of his iron shots 20-25 feet below the pin. He made his eagle on the 512-yard 11th hole by reaching the green in two and rolling in a 12-foot putt.

Ogilvie, who has appeared relaxed the entire week while either tied for the lead or in front by himself, smiled and waved to the crowd when his eagle putt dropped.

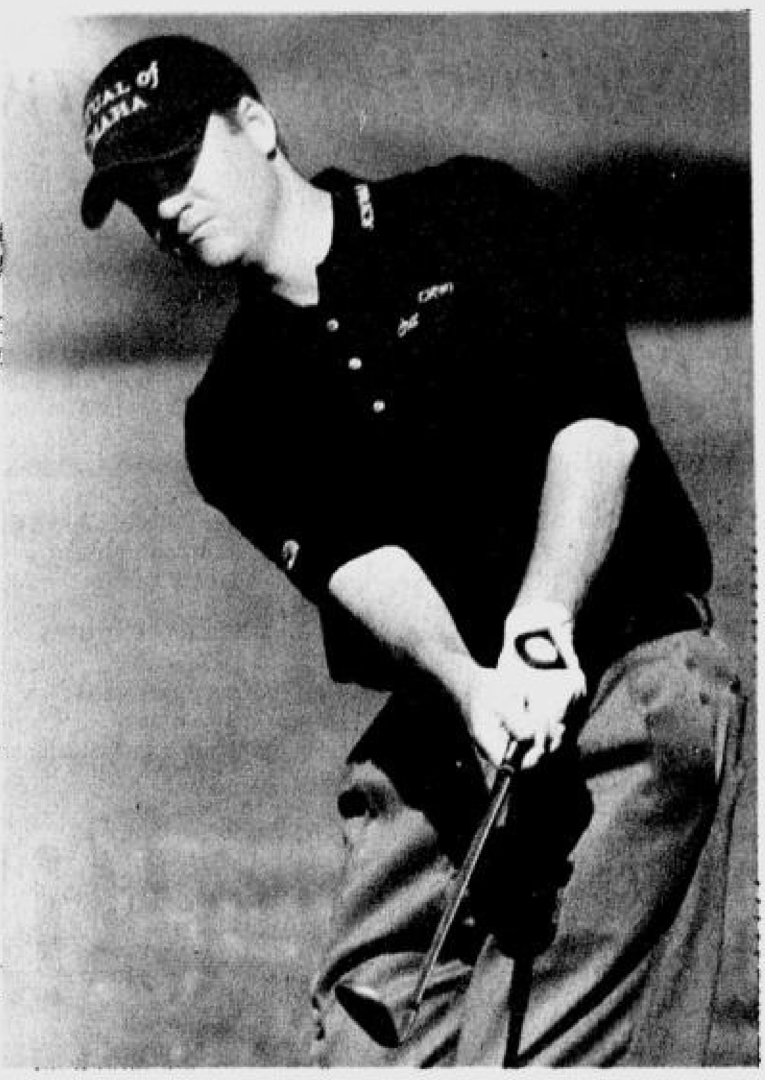
His best finish on the tour is a second-place tie with Mickelson at New Orleans last year. Ogilvie was leading heading into the final nine holes, but Vijay Singh shot a 29 on the back nine to win.

Lonard, 37, the winner of a string of titles in Australia but none in America, has eight top-10 finishes on the PGA Tour, including a third place during his rookie season of 2002.

Leonard has won eight times, including the 1997 British Open. He reeled off six birdies over his final nine holes during the fourth round, including a 30-footer on No. 12, to vault into contention.

Craig Stadler, who won the 1980 Hope for his first tour victory, had moved into contention with a third-round 65, but had a fourth-round 71 to drop back into the pack at 271. Fred Couples also was in that group after a 68.

The players were grouped with amateurs for the first four days of the tournament, with the field cut to the low 70 pros and ties for Sunday's final round at PGA West. *AP*



IF HE nails his first win, Ogilvie will not be just an ordinary Joe. REUTERS

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2002 Mitsubishi Lancer GLXi A/T	490,000,00	17,001.00	5,100.00	11,901.00
2003 Mitsubishi Adventure Sport	645,000.00	15,869.68	4,760.90	11,108.77
2003 Mitsubishi Pajero A/T	1,200,000.00	28,073.00	8,422.00	19,651.00
1999 Nissan Exalta M/T	360,000.00	12,855.00	3,857.00	8,999.00
1999 Nissan Frontier 4x4 A/T	535,000.00	13,319.00	3,996.00	9,323.00
2000 Nissan Patrol 3.0 4x4 A/T	1,200,000.00	28,073.00	8,422.00	19,651.00
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Sidelights: Replays, Serena spending, tournament trivia

MELBOURNE, Australia—Australian Open chief executive Paul McNamee said Sunday that video technology to assist chair umpires was "inevitable" and was likely to be introduced here in 2006 with funds already allocated in next year's tournament budget.

McNamee says the video should be on point-ending challenges only.

"It's only on the last point of the rally, otherwise you would end up with no linesmen at all," said McNamee. "You would have machines calling the lines and that is not where the sport wants to go—you don't want to remove the human element completely."

Earlier in the tournament, women's champion Serena Williams said players should only be able to challenge two or three calls a match.

She's in favor of helping line judges and chair umpires, perhaps because of her much-discussed loss to Jennifer Capriati at last year's US Open.

Williams was hurt by several officiating errors.

The United States Tennis Association is investigating the technology and is hoping to introduce line calling aids for umpires at the next US Open.

"We're very encouraged by the initial testing," US Tennis Association spokesperson Chris Widmaier said earlier. "There's a lot of steps to go, but our goal is to have some type of electric line calling aids for umpires at the 2005 US Open."

Serena celebrates

Serena Williams held true to her promise, celebrating her Australian Open final win over Lindsay Davenport by shopping at some Melbourne boutiques.

Hours after her win, Williams jumped on a water taxi with her trophy and motored down the Yarra River, which runs alongside Melbourne Park.

Williams took the more sensible option—American Jim Courier jumped into the murky Yarra fully clothed after his singles wins in 1992 and 1993.

Statistics, statistics

It took nearly two weeks, but tournament organizers finally provided the usual statistics on how many hotdogs were eaten, how many people through the doors, how many kilometers on the courtesy cars.

So here goes:

The 14-day tournament broke the 500,000 attendance mark for the sixth year in a row, up more than 20,000 on last year.

It also saw the highest one-day attendance in history when 60,069 spectators came to Melbourne Park on Saturday, Jan. 22.

Celebrity visitors included golfer Greg Norman, boxer Kostya Tszyu, former LA Lakers basketball coach Phil Jackson, singer Olivia Newton-John and actor Geoffrey Rush.

Hungry patrons ate 31,700 buckets of french fries, 13,700 hot dogs, 11,714 meat pies and drank 111,000 espresso coffees. The tournament's 88 courtesy cars drove 340,000 kilometers (210,000 miles).

Aussies in top 10

Australia will have a man and woman in the world's top 10 for the first time in 21 years—Lleyton Hewitt and Alicia Molik—when the next rankings are released.

Hewitt will rise from No. 3 to second in the rankings Monday after becoming the first Australian since John Newcombe in 1970 to progress to at least the quarterfinals of four consecutive Grand Slam tournaments.

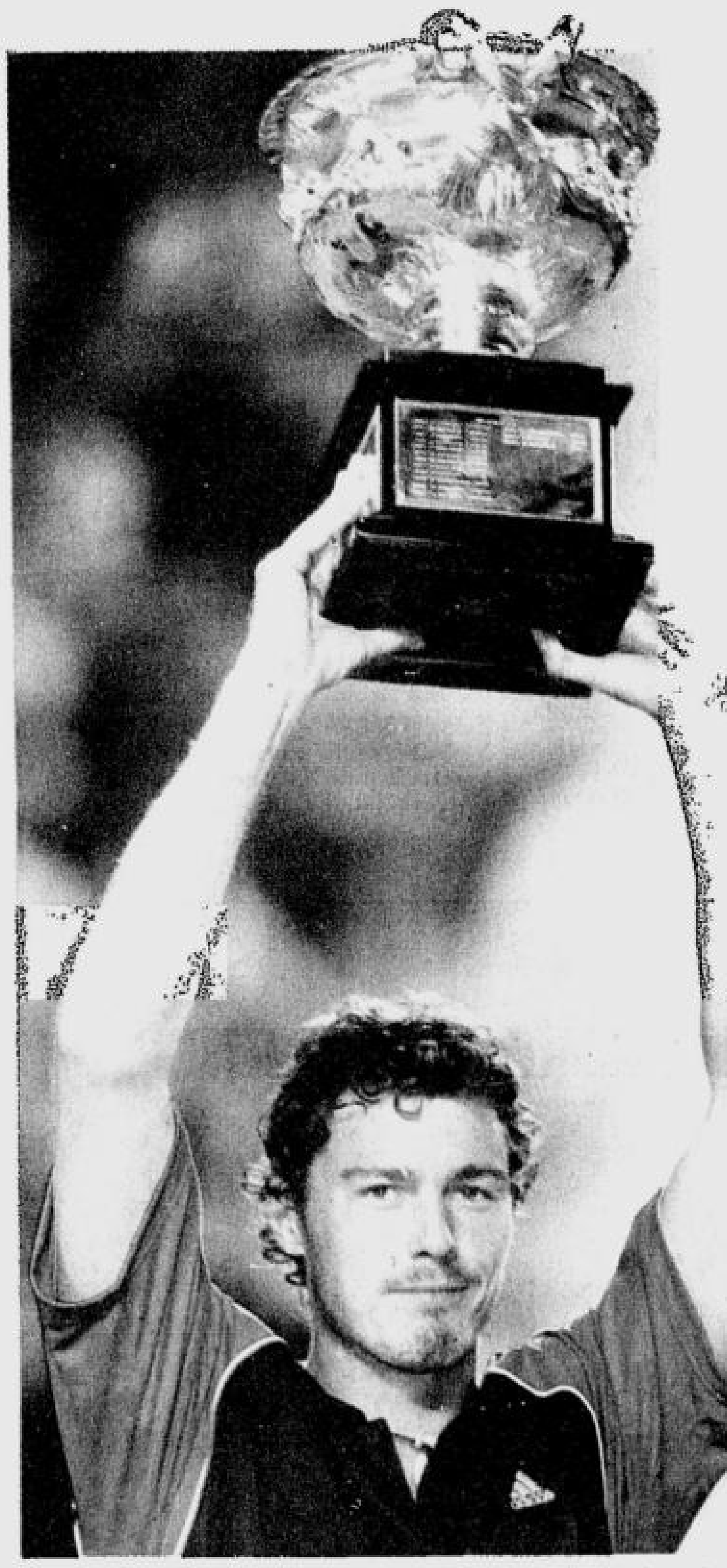
Roger Federer, who lost to Marat Safin here in the semifinals, remains No. 1, while Andy Roddick drops one place to No. 3 and Safin is fourth.

Molik will climb from No. 12 to 10th after becoming the first Australian woman since Anne Minter in 1988 to advance to the quarterfinals at Melbourne Park. Molik beat Venus Williams in the fourth round.

Losing finalist Lindsay Davenport remains at No. 1, while Australian Open champion Serena Williams moves up to second from seventh. *AP*

Safin fulfills his destiny

Mercurial Russian bags Australian Open crown



MARAT Safin holds up the winner's trophy he felt destined to win.

MELBOURNE, Australia—It was third time lucky for Marat Safin.

The fourth-seeded Safin, who felt he was destined to win the Australian Open after two runner-up finishes in the last three years, rallied to down No. 3 Lleyton Hewitt, 1-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4, in an acrimonious final Sunday, the tournament's first-ever at night.

It was the second Grand Slam title for the 25-year-old Russian, who is as mercurial as his record—he won the US Open in 2000 and rose soon afterward to No. 1, then plunged as low as 86th after injuries in 2003. He started his comeback here last year by reaching the final, which he lost to Roger Federer.

He ended top-ranked Federer's 26-match winning streak on Thursday in the semifinals.

"I would like to congratulate Marat, you are one of the best players in the world," said Hewitt, who, despite the loss, will rise to No. 2 in the new rankings, swapping places with Andy Roddick. "You knocked off the guy who's nearly been impossible. You thoroughly deserve it."

Safin was just as gracious to Hewitt.

"You are such a fighter, an amazing talent that God gave you to fight to the end," Safin said as he thanked everyone, including the crowd—"even though 90 percent of you were for Hewitt."

Although he usually feeds off controversy—angering three opponents with his on-court shouts and staredowns on his way to the final—the aggressive Hewitt unraveled as he sought to become the first Australian to win this event since Mark Edmondson in 1976. The sellout crowd urged him on, but Hewitt couldn't feed off their energy this time.

Safin, who got a good luck cell phone text message from the only other Russian to win a men's Grand Slam title—Yevgeny Kafelnikov at the 1996 French Open and 1999 at Melbourne Park—was the one who looked tight at the start. He won only three points while dropping the first three games and was broken on four backhand errors while serving for the first time.

Another three errors gave Hewitt triple break point at 4-1. Safin rallied to deuce, but Hewitt made it 5-1 on a topspin lob winner and a forehand crosscourt passing shot.

Hewitt seemed at the top of his game, zipping from sideline to sideline while committing only one unforced error in the 23-minute first set—to 13 for Safin—and yielding only two points in his four service games.

LLEYTON Hewitt simply had no answer to Marat Safin's savvy. REUTERS

Hewitt finally started slipping while serving at 1-2 in the second set. At 15-40, Safin got hold of a serve and rammed a forehand down the line to cash in his first breakpoint opportunity.

Hewitt fended off one set point serving at 2-5, but Safin—still looking nervous—leveled the match on a forehand winner down the line off a weak service return from the Australian.

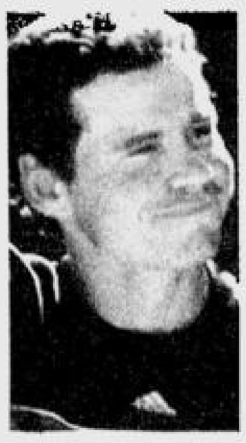
With fist pumps and shouts of "Come on! Come on!" Hewitt saved two break points in the first game of the third set as tensions rose and both men's nerves frayed even more.

Hewitt screamed "No way!" at Portuguese umpire Carlos Ramos in the next game after an overrule on a Safin shot that he thought was long but TV replays showed was on the line.

Safin had his own fist pump and shout of "Vamos!"—Let's go—after one winner, but Hewitt broke when he guessed right on a Safin volley and sent a backhand winner down the line. Safin sent a forehand long on the next point. *AP*

Part-time golfer now has Grand Slam too

MELBOURNE, Australia—Australian pair Scott Draper and Samantha Stosur won the Australian Open mixed doubles championship Sunday, defeating Kevin Ullyett of Zimbabwe and Liezel Huber of South Africa, 6-2, 2-6, 7-6 (6).



DRAPER AP

It was the Australian combination's first mixed doubles tournament together after receiving a wild card from organizers. Stosur was scheduled to play with another player, who withdrew on the eve of the tournament.

"I thought of Scott and I'm really glad he said yes," said Stosur.

Draper, who is also a professional golfer, had to juggle sports over the past four days, playing in his first pro golf event on Friday morning and winning his mixed doubles semifinal on Friday afternoon.

He missed the cut in the Victoria Open after shooting an opening 79. The third round finished Sunday—as the mixed doubles championship was being decided.

Draper, who qualified for his Australasian PGA Tour card last December, is hoping for a start in next week's Heineken Classic at nearby Royal Melbourne, but may have to qualify on Monday. Ernie Els, Greg Norman, Colin Montgomerie and Adam Scott are entered at Royal Melbourne.

"Scott's having a bit of a blinder—he's one of the luckiest guys in the world, to be able to go out in the morning and play golf and then come out in the afternoon and win a Grand Slam title," said Ullyett. "He's the envy of the male population."

Draper said it was a great week.

"It's been interesting," said Draper. "We've got a Grand Slam title now and no one can take that away from us."

On Saturday, Ullyett and Wayne Black won their second Grand Slam doubles title, defeating Americans Bob Bryan and Mike Bryan 6-4, 6-4. *AP*

Sharapova leads Russian charge vs Davenport

TOKYO—Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova will lead a Russian attempt to prevent a record fifth victory for world number one Lindsay Davenport at the Pan Pacific Open tennis tournament this week.

Davenport, the American top seed and losing finalist at the Australian Open Saturday, is joint holder of the most Pan Pacific titles along with retired former world No. 1 Martina Hingis of Switzerland on four.

But second seed Sharapova will be returning to a happy hunting ground where she won her first WTA singles and doubles titles and successfully defended the singles at the Japan Open in October.

The 17-year-old Russian starlet; a big favorite with Japanese supporters, also won her first professional title in the ITF Circuit series at Gunma north of Tokyo two years ago.

In their only previous encounter, Sharapova defeated Davenport, 2-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-1, in the Wimbledon semifinals on the way to her first Grand Slam victory in July.

Before meeting Sharapova, Davenport must survive the top half of the draw, which includes Russia's US Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova, who is third seed; Slovakia's Daniela Hantuchova, eighth seed; and Jelena Jankovic of Serbia and Montenegro, the seventh seed.

Davenport received a first-round bye with other top three seeds and faces a Japanese challenge from either Saori Obata or Miho Saeki in the second round.

Sharapova was drawn in the bottom half with fourth seed Russian Elena Dementieva, who finished runner-up in the French and US opens last season, and sixth-seeded Russian Elena Likhovtseva, as well as fifth seed Ai Sugiyama of Japan.

Patty Schnyder of Switzerland, Nathalie Dechy of France, last year's runner-up Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria and doubles specialist Lisa Raymond of the United States withdrew due to injuries, organizers said.

The contest starts Tuesday. *AFP*

VICTORIA Azarenka: Girls' champ REUTERS

Donald is youngest junior No. 1

MELBOURNE, Australia—American Donald Young won the Australian Open boys singles title on Sunday, earning the No. 1 junior ranking in the process.

Young's 6-2, 6-4 win over top-seeded Kim Sun-yong of South Korea meant the left-hander from Chicago is—at 15 years, six months—the youngest to hold the top spot since the junior rankings began.

"I'm really excited. I don't know what to say. I've been wanting to win this for a while and it happened," Young said.

Young said he had wanted to be "No. 1 since I started playing." Young's tournament profile said he started playing at age two.

"Maybe tomorrow when I see actually No. 1 by my name, then I'll realize it," he added.

Young, runner-up at the last Orange Bowl tournament, was too strong for Kim, who struggled with his game and hit 41 unforced errors.

Young broke to lead 5-4 and served out when Kim hit a forehand into the net at match point.

"I knew coming into the match, he was tired. He had like four three-setters and I just wanted to work him, move him around, keep him out there a little while," Young said.

Young, who is 1.75-meters (5-foot-9) tall, said he was now more confident, and felt like he was "up there with the rest of them."

Young was unsure how he'd celebrate Sunday's big win.

"I don't know, watch a movie," he said. "I don't know really because my parents are talking about going to the casino, but I can't go in. So there's no point... I'll just sit outside, I guess."

Top-ranked Victoria Azarenka of Belarus won the junior girls' title by beating Hungary's Agnes Szavay, seeded 12th, 6-2, 6-2.

Azarenka, who now lives in Spain, lost in the semifinals of the Wimbledon and US Open junior events last year after holding match points. *AP*

DONALD Young exults after the victory. AP

Mayol stops Indon rival in 7th round

Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

ORIENTAL and Pacific Boxing Federation minimumweight champion Rodel Mayol of the Stonewall Boxing Gym successfully defended his title with a show of power Saturday night as he demolished Indon challenger Marty Polii in the seventh of their scheduled 12-round fight topbilling the "Against All Odds" card at the Casino Filipino in Parañaque.

The dynamite-fisted Mayol sent down Polii thrice in the seventh with crisp body shots, prompting the referee to stop the carnage at the 1:33 mark of the round.

The unbeaten Mayol also knocked down Polii twice in the sixth round and once in the first round.

It was the 20th win for Mayol and his 16th inside the distance.

In the chief supporting bout, ex-Philippine flyweight champ Edgar Rodrigo needed just a single round to dispose of Thai Somyot Vor Surapol in an OPBF eliminator.

At ringside were newly installed Games and Amusements Board chair Eric Buhain and commissioners Angel Bautista and Alex Paglumotan.

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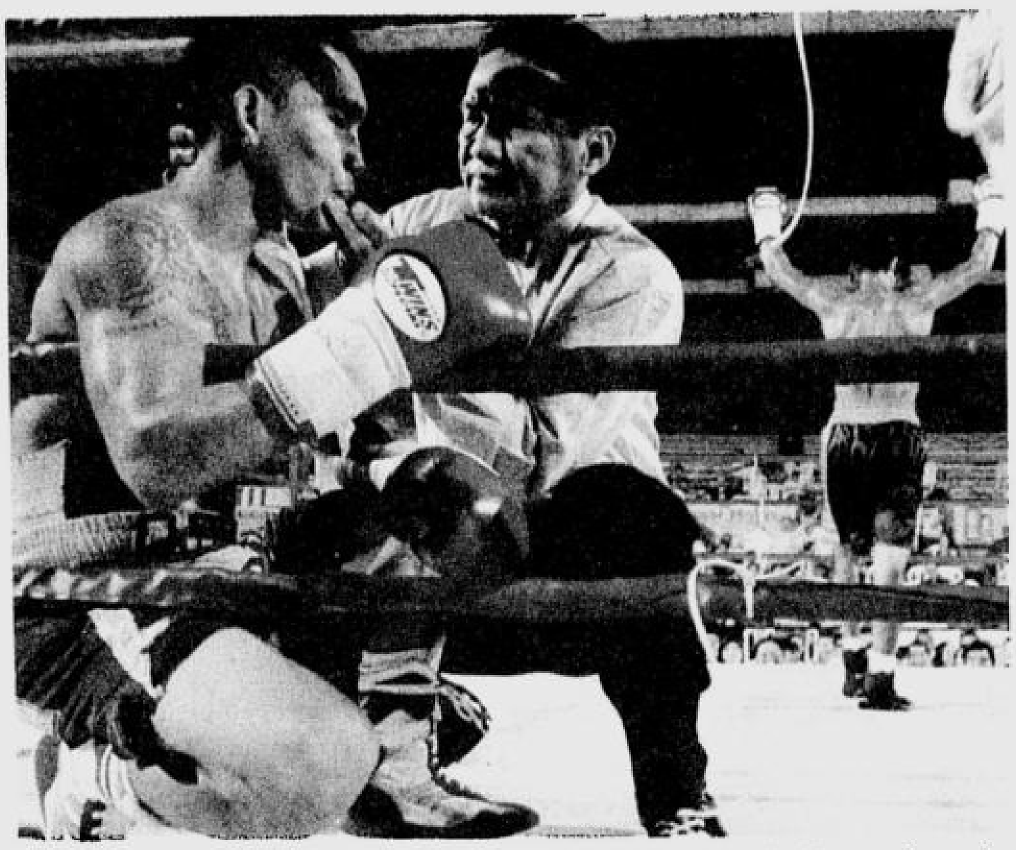
OPBF champion Rodel Mayol (right) connects with a vicious right to the face of Indonesian challenger Marti Polii.

EDWIN BACASMAS



POLII gets help from the referee as Mayol turns his back while celebrating his seventh round victory in their OPBF minimumweight championship fight Saturday night at the Casino Filipino in Parañaque.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Bautista decisions African; Sultan outclasses Caballes

Salven L. Lagumbay

MANDAUE CITY—Reigning World Boxing Organization Asia Pacific bantamweight champion Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista was stretched to the full twelve rounds by South African challenger Vuyisile Bebe before prevailing by unanimous decision in the mainer of the "Ultimate Challenge" card at the Mandaue City Sports and Cultural Complex Saturday.

Egged on by some 5,000 fans who filled the sports complex to the rafters, Bautista scored the only knockdown of the fight with a looping overhand right in the third round.

While he failed to knock out his foe, the scores of the three judges (120-106, 116-109, and 117-110) showed Bautista's clear domination of the contest.

"I felt I won every round. I was never in danger. I felt I could handle his power punches. He was just too crafty to clinch every time I went on the offensive," Bautista said in a post-fight interview.

Sportsman Tony Aldeguer, Bautista's manager, commended his ward's performance, and said he thought the African did not win a round—a view shared by promoter Sammy "Don King" Gello-ani.

Referee Bruce McTavish agreed with Aldeguer and Gello-ani, saying the African was tough but did not impress to win a single round.

"However, Bautista should learn from this. He should not get frustrated during the fight and stay on his game plan," the Angeles City-based Kiwi said.

The win improved the 18-year-old Bautista's record to 13-0 with 9 KOs, and lined him up for a March bout in Hawaii.

Meanwhile, Philippine welter king Dondon "Supremo" Sultan of SGG Stable needed less than three minutes to do what many considered a herculean task as he easily disposed of challenger Ramil Caballes of Wakee Salud Stable in the opening round of a scheduled 12-rounder.

An overhand right by Sultan early in the round sent Caballes on all fours, and barely able to beat the count. He was downed again by a hybrid right uppercut, managed to beat the count a second time but was soon eating leather for his third trip to the canvas.

The referee finally halted the fight after two minutes and six seconds of the opening round.

The win solidified Sultan's status as the OPBF's top-ranked welterweight, and should give him a crack at the crown anytime this year.

Up next for Sultan is an April 10 showdown with Japanese Taesei Marumoto in Sanda, Japan.

Lady Archers advance against PMI cagebelles

THE LA Salle Lady Archers are back in the finals of the 12th National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA) women's basketball tournament.

Heads-up plays by Kristine Prado, Jan Laureola, Kreme Huelar and Miel David sparked the Lady Archers' 67-31 rout of Rizal Technological University last Saturday at the Pasay Sports Complex.

They will face an unfamiliar opponent in the Philippine Maritime Institute Lady Admirals in a best-of-three showdown that begins on Feb. 7.

The Lady Admirals, who earned a place in the title playoffs for the first time in eight years, leaned on the cat-quick plays of Ruby Abad, Janice de Guzman and Eilene de Jesus in putting away the Polytechnic University of the Philippines Lady Maroons, 68-54.

Prado, who showed no signs of an injury, which sidelined her twice during practice last week, led the Lady Archers with 16 points, 16 rebounds, two steals and an assist.

She hit eight points in the first period as La Salle assumed a 16-4 spread.

Laureola tallied 14 points and also had eight points in carrying the Lady Archers to a 26-13 halftime lead. Huelar and David combined for 16 points as they helped the Lady Archers keep the upper hand in the next two periods.

The Lady Archers will now have the chance of avenging their 73-79 upset loss to the Lady Admirals in the first round.

"Hopefully, we can get back at them," said assistant coach Regina Jose, who took charge in the absence of Mon Jose and Dominic Uy.

Abad shot 22 game-high points for the Lady Admirals and strung up nine points with De Guzman, 2:52 left in the third, enabling PMI to move ahead, 43-37.

De Guzman, who unloaded 16, and Jessa Toniza joined hands in a big last-quarter run, which powered the Lady Admirals to a 56-44 edge.

"What more can I ask from the girls? Entering the semifinals is already an achievement," said De Guzman. "And now, we are in the finals. We are truly blessed."

The scores:

First Game (women)

PMI 68—Abad 22, de Guzman 16, de Jesus 10, Quirante 9, Toniza 5, Suarez 4, Romero 2, Montoya 0, Reynaldo 0.

PUP 54— Ramos 16, Novero 13, Pacheco 11, Angeles 5, Abella 3, Hormillosa 2, Dacumi 2, Arena 2.

Halftime: 33-30.

Second Game (women)

La Salle—Manila 67- Prado 16, Laureola 14, Huelar 9, David 7, Flormata 4, Sancho 3, Realubit 3, Dimaporo 2, Que 2, Cruz 2, Candano 2, Laurel 0.

RTU 31—Ong 4, Z. Peralta 4, Blancaflor 4, Binalla 4, Pena 4, Peralta 3, Valle 3, Abacial 2, Consulta 2, Corral 1.

Halftime: 26-13.

Santo Tomas coach secures tie for Baguio chessfest lead

Standings after round 5:
4.5-NM Silva, Cantonjos
4.0-NM Maga, NM Liwagon, Valencia, Evangelista, Panopio, Dimarucut, Pinic
3.5-Labay, Pascua, Alvez 3.0-Gatus, Ballco, Rosaupan

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—National master Winston Silva tripped Rainier Labay in 45 moves of a King's Indian yesterday to take a share of the lead after five rounds of the 2005 Baguio Active Chess Open here.

The 27-year-old Silva, head coach of the Santo Tomas U team in the UAAP, now has 4.5 points along with overnight leader Allan Cantonjos, who was held to a draw by NM Bob Jones Liwagon in 30 moves of an English opening.

"I just got lucky, I guess," said Silva of his win over Labay.

Cantonjos, an enlisted man with the Philippine Air Force, never got the edge he was looking for against Liwagon, who is, ironically, Silva's top player at Santo Tomas.

Liwagon is now tied with six others with 4 points. Noel Pinic, NM Mirabeau Maga, Belsar Valencia, Ritchie Evangelista, Rodolfo Panopio and Erwin Dimarucut are the other four-pointers.

Labay remained with 3.5 points together with Baguio City standout Ronald Alvez and Mangatarem, Pangasinan, bet Patricio Pascua.

Baguio police chief Col. Isagani Nerez, meanwhile, pledged to double the prize money of the tournament with P16,000 now going to the champion of this event that drew a total of 58 players.

Marlon Bernardino

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Araullo, Macasieb triathlon champs

By Jasmine W. Payo

BAYAWAN CITY—Sandra Araullo was catching her breath nearing the finish line. But the 23-year-old triathlete still managed to let out a scream after breasting the tape first in the 2005 National Triathlon Championship yesterday here in Negros Oriental.

"I have to admit I wasn't confident coming into this race," said Araullo after bagging her second straight title in the elite women's division.

"But I guess if you put in the hard work, even if you seem to doubt yourself, it will show," added Araullo, who clocked two hours, 26 minutes and 34 seconds for the grueling swim-bike-run event.

But Araullo, a physics teacher at the University of the Philippines, wasn't the only winner who came in to the race quite skeptical.

"I only had minimal training because it's winter in the States," confessed New Jersey-based Arland Macasieb, who clinched the title in the elite men's division after a 2:09:05 finish. "I wasn't even planning to join this race but I needed this to qualify for the SEA Games."

Macasieb, who did a somersault after crossing the finish line, foiled George Vilog's bid to defend his crown.

Vilog was hoping to reclaim his slot in the national pool after being suspended for disciplinary reasons.

"I had a difficult time swimming," said the fourth-placer Vilog. "*Babawi na lang ako* (I'll make up for it) in the two other qualifying races."

The win boosted Araullo and Macasieb's chances in earning slots to the Southeast Asian Games.

"It was a pretty good race," said Macasieb. "I wasn't really expecting much because I only started training in December."

The 29-year-old personal fitness trainer will be leaving for the United States next week but will be back here for the Subic Bay International Triathlon on May 8.

Araullo, who surpassed her personal best of 2:27:58, closely trailed 15-year-old Mimi Lucas in the swim and bike legs. But Araullo banked on her strength in running to pull away in the final 10-km run leg.

Lucas took second spot at 2:29:49, while 2003 title-holder Ani Karina De Leon was third in 2:31:29.

ARAULLO powers her way in the swim leg of the National Triathlon Championship yesterday. CDN/TONEE DESPOJO

Macasieb led most of the way but he was closely followed home by Noel Salvador, the 2002 and 2003 champion from Bacolod City, who checked in at 2:10:06. RP team assistant coach Peter Gonzales clocked in a minute later at 2:11:45 for third.

In the 23-and-under division, Mikki Quilala led the men's category with a time of 2:16:44. The 16-year-old top junior triathlete impressively clocked in eight minutes ahead of Gerry Calinawan from Cebu City (2:24:45).

Alexandra Ganzon topped the women's category at 2:38:51. The 18-year-old Iloilo representative bested 2004 Asian Triathlon Champion LC Langit (2:44:35) and former national junior champion Kaye Lopez (2:50:58).

In the male junior division, 12-year-old sensation Joash Serrano expectedly took the top spot in 1:15:09. Dec Rowan Fernandez clocked in two minutes later at 1:17:40, while Andrew Gatmaitan took the third spot at 1:18:17.

Marion Kim Mangrobang bagged the crown in the female junior category.

In the beginners' category, Glenn Tantug of Cebu City won the men's division at 1:27:45, while Bayawan City resident Mae Chayla Catacutan timed in at 1:44:41 for a first-place finish in the women's division.

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ABS-CBN 2				Showbiz No. 1	Sandara's Romance	Get Backers	Ragnarok	Masked Rider Ryuki	TV Patrol	Spirits	Krystala	Lovers In Paris	Hiram	Star Circle Nat'l Teen Quest	OK Fine! Whatever			Insider	The Correspondents
NBN	Value Vision				Teledyaryo	Value Vision	Next Stop			Network Forum		Teledyaryo		The Working President	Concert at the Park			Dial M	
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	Art Is-Kool	Anime Ring Kasho				Sentro	Friends	The Apprentice		Fear Factor		Big News	Popst		Extreme Island	Billboard On-Air
GMA 7	Leya (2:45 PM)	Joyride (3:15 PM)	Snow Angel (3:45 PM)		One Piece	Witch Hunter Robin	Slam Dunk	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Mulawin	Starstruck (8:45 PM)	Forever In My Heart (9:15 PM) Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita			Saksi		
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Solar		Wow		Slamball		Restol	Zeta Project	Mucha Lucha!	Spiderman	Deep Space Nine		Celebrity Boxing 2/ WWE New Year's Revolution							
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HBO	Funny Farm (2:20 PM)			Suspect (4:05 PM)				Enough (6:05 PM)			Child's Play 2 (7:35 PM)			Multiplicity				Six Feet Under 30: Nobody Sleeps	
Star Movies			Deceived			Hart's War (5:15 PM)					Creature (7:20 PM)			Insomnia			Far From Heaven		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Police Academy	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Teen Titans	Yu-Gi-Oh!	Gundam Seed	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Codename: Kids Next Door	Mr. T	Josie And The Pussycats	Boomerang - Boomeraction	Yu-Gi-Oh!
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Cinemax	Tobruk			Cinema Secrets III Ep 7: Oscar Winning FX	Scent Of A Woman (4:45 PM)						Orange County			Betrayal			Charlotte Gray (10:35PM)		
Hallmark Channel	Mad About You	Plainsong				Play With Me Sesame	Sesame Street		Bewitched	Agency II		Child Of Our Time		Defending Our Kids: The Julie Posey Story			Just Cause (10:35PM)		Agency II (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		Extreme Engineering		Monster Garage		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Unsolved History				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Civilisations	
MTV Philippines		MTV Lokal		Non-Stop Hits		Non-Stop Hits		MTV Get Spotted	MTV Loveline	MTV U-Break		MTV Brand New	MTV Fashionista	TRL		Cribs	Spring Break	VH1 Hits/ Video Collection	
Sports Plus	Porsche Round 11&12	Turtle Bay C'ship Final Round						Superbowl3 Colts vs Cowboys		Acc Basketball, Nrth Carolina @ Maryland				NFL Delayed Telecast	Bob Hope Chrysler Final rd				
EWTN	St. Matthew	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Benediction And Devotion	Story Keepers	Image Of God	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	Light Of The East II	Voices On Virtue	EWTN Gallery	Threshold Of Hope Encore		Sunday Night Live With Fr Groeschel		Daily Mass		Angelus (10:15PM)	G.K. Chesterton	Catholic Compass	

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Zsa Zsa: Hard to imagine life without Dolphy

By Kathryn Fatima Reyes

"AFTER being together for 16 years, it's hard to imagine life without Dolphy. [But] we haven't talked about it. We didn't plan ahead."

Singer/actress Zsa Zsa Padilla was answering the questions of entertainment reporters about the recent annulment of her marriage to a dentist and if she and her long-time live-in partner would finally get married.

"When I got the annulment," Zsa Zsa said, "I told him (Dolphy), Let's play it by ear."

The annulment was granted early this month. Her ex-husband, Modesto Tatlonghari, is the father of her daughter, young singer/actress Karylle.

"In the beginning I felt pressured because everybody was expecting me to get married, especially after the annulment," said Zsa Zsa, now 40. "But then I learned to [ignore] that. I'm the one who's getting married anyway.

"It's so liberating," she said of the annulment. "It's a wonderful way of celebrating the new year."

MR. HUMILITY. "He is the humblest person I know," Zsa Zsa says of Dolphy.

'We've been through worse. The first two years of our relationship were the most difficult'

Situation, not person

Late last year, there was persistent talk that she and the 77-year-old comedian were headed for Splitsville. Zsa Zsa maintained, however, that like any other couple, they had problems but that was it.

"Usually the problem is not the person," she said. "It's the situation."

She refused to comment when reporters insinuated that the cause of their problem was Dolphy's continued support of his children from his previous relationships.

Zsa Zsa made it clear, though, that their problem was not reason enough for them to break up. She said she and Dolphy have agreed that no matter what happened, they would always work things out.

"We've been through worse," she volunteered. "I mean, the first two years of our relationship were the most difficult. We feel that if we could survive that, then we could survive worse. We've proven that we're stronger together.

When it comes to being humble, she said, Dolphy is her best teacher. "He is the humblest person I know. He never brags."

Not forever

Zsa Zsa, who now manages her show biz career to make sure her commitments do not get in the way of her spending time with her family, said she can't brag about her accomplishments especially to Dolphy, who has certainly achieved so much more than she has.

She said she didn't want the superstar treatment get to her head.

"I always try to keep my feet on the ground," she said. "Sometimes, all the applause can make you feel like everybody worships you, but when a new and younger star comes along, they forget about you. It can't be your moment forever."

"FACES OF LOVE." She and Gary V perform together on Feb. 14 and 15 at Le Pavilion on Roxas Boulevard.

Zsa Zsa was speaking in a press conference for "Faces of Love," her Valentine show with Gary V on Feb. 14 and 15 at Le Pavilion on Roxas Boulevard.

Asked if Dolphy would celebrate Valentine's Day and be in the audience during her show, Zsa Zsa crossed her fingers and said, "He might not go," she said. "You see, he's an endorser of Talk 'N Text and one of the sponsors of our show is Globe. That's how he is. He's very loyal.

"Maybe we could go on a date before or after the show," she said.

Too young

The mother of 23-year-old Karylle and Dolphy's Nicole, 14, and Zia, 13, Zsa Zsa admitted she went through a procedure called lipo dissolve to keep her figure. She also works out a lot.

Karylle, who admitted that she was saddened by the news of her parents' annulment, was mature enough to understand the situation, said Zsa Zsa. "I told her, 'I was just too young then. But your father did a wonderful job of raising you.'"

Where boys are concerned, Zsa Zsa said, her eldest daughter consults her all the time. Karylle, a GMA talent, is being paired off with Dingdong Dantes, who is her co-star in "Love to Love."

Is Dingdong courting Karylle? Zsa Zsa smiled and said, "So they say.

"Actually they look good together," the doting mother noted. "I'm a fan of theirs [love team of Dingdong and Karylle]. *'Di ba totoo naman*, they look good together?"

After her Valentine concert with Gary V, Zsa Zsa will be working on a new album for Viva. She said she and Karylle were also offered to do a mother-daughter special for Mothers' Day.

'GMA wants to implement her plans for the film industry'

THE FILIPINO motion picture arts are highlighted in the celebration of National Artists' Month in February at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

The celebration includes "Cinema Paraiso 3," a festival of mainstream and non-mainstream movies that emphasize the convergence of technology and new ways of looking at cinema.

The second, "Pelikula at Lipunan," is a festival of restored short films and documentaries from the past.

The celebration underlines the commitment of President Macapagal-Arroyo to spur a renaissance in Philippine cinema.

The President had promised during last year's election campaign to help bring back the old glory of Filipino films if she won a new mandate.

Right after her election victory, the

'GMA/ A2-6

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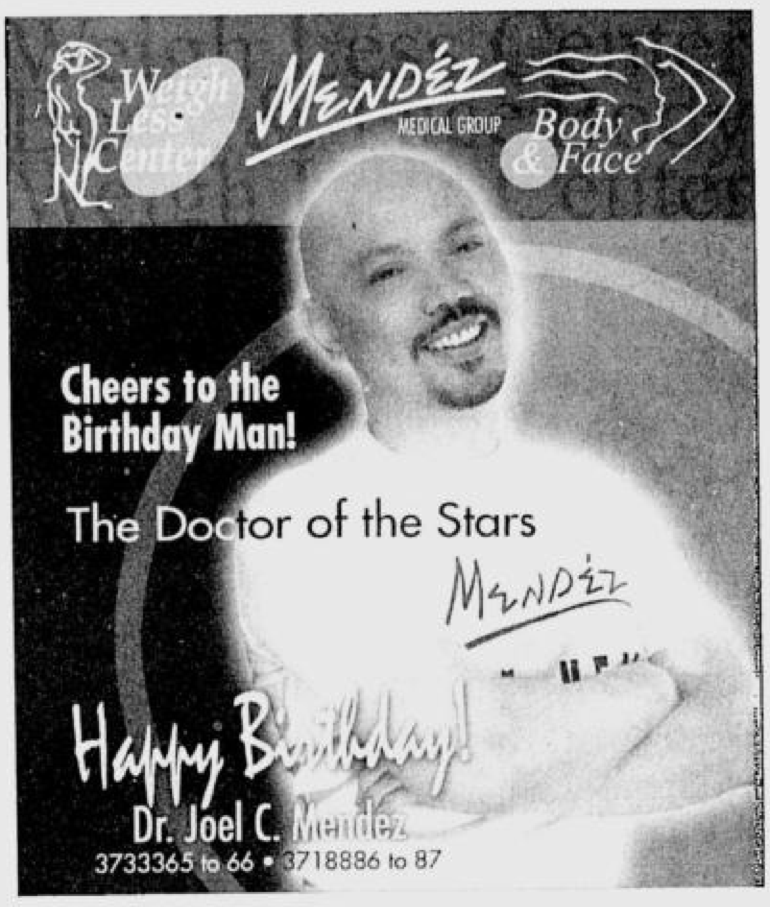
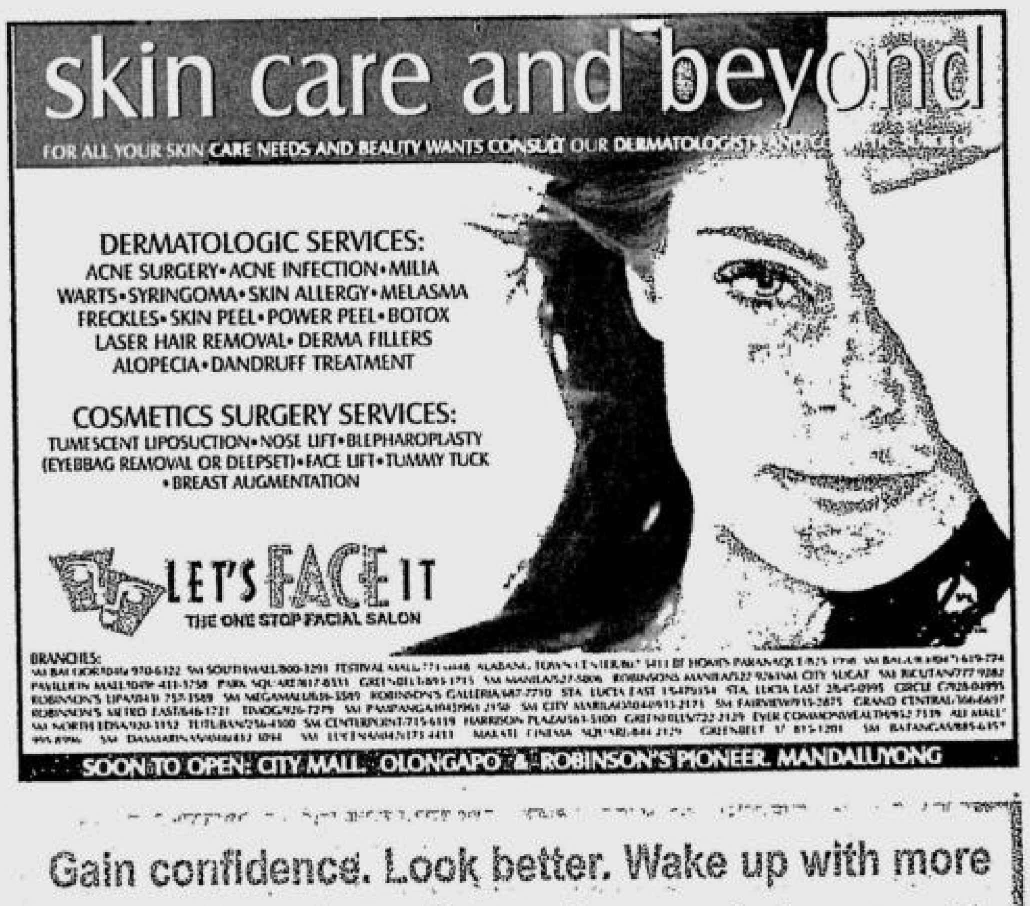


Cheers to the Birthday Man!

The Doctor of the Stars

Happy Birthday!
Dr. Joel C. Mendez
3733365 to 66 • 3718886 to 87



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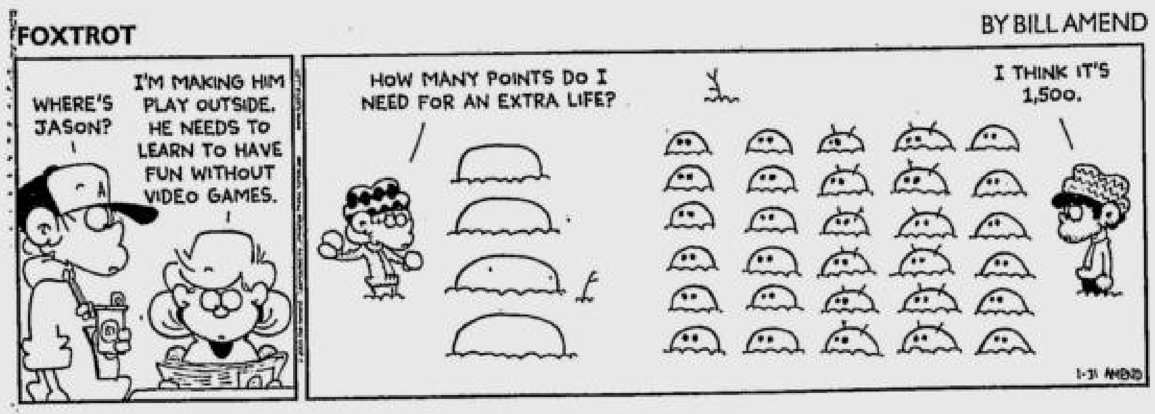
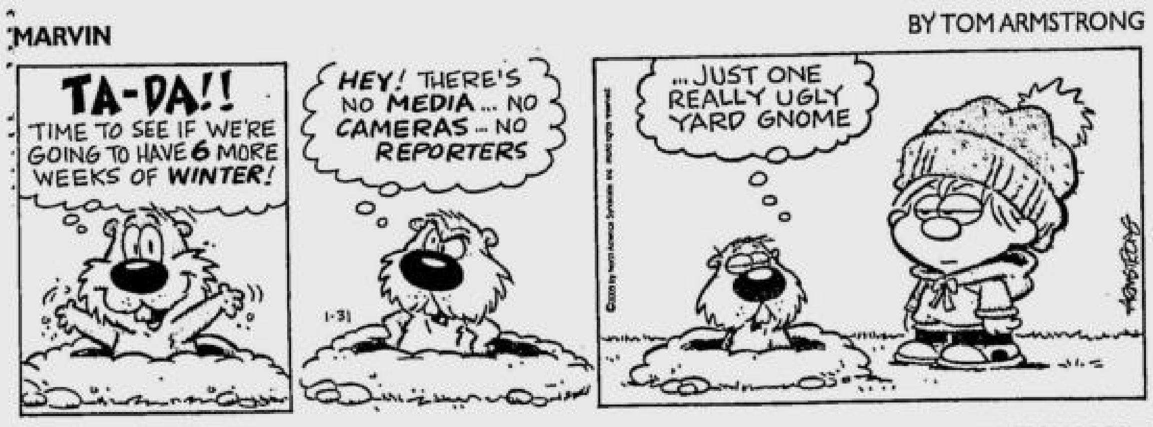
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WHERE'S JASON?
I'M MAKING HIM PLAY OUTSIDE. HE NEEDS TO LEARN TO HAVE FUN WITHOUT VIDEO GAMES.
HOW MANY POINTS DO I NEED FOR AN EXTRA LIFE?
I THINK IT'S 1,500.
1-31 AMEND

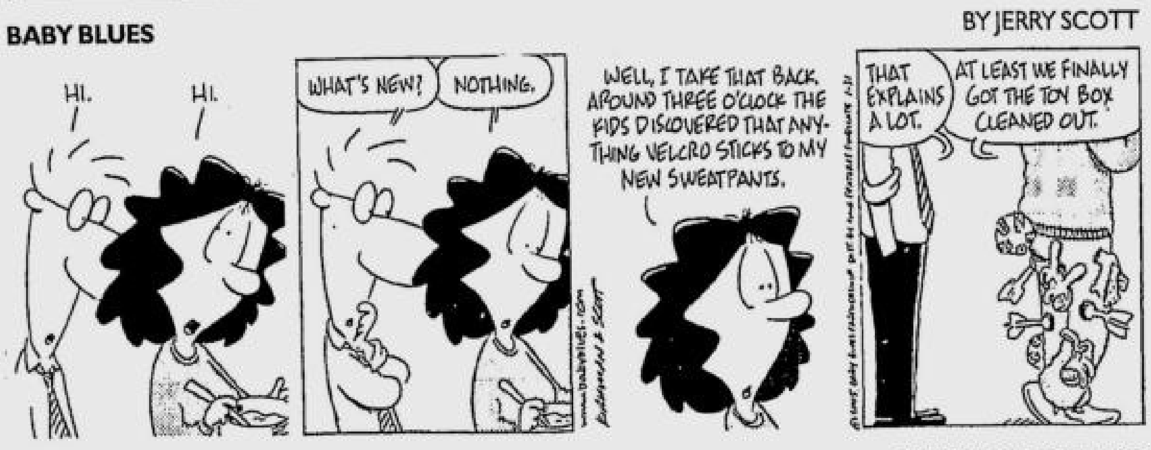
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


TA-DA!! TIME TO SEE IF WE'RE GOING TO HAVE 6 MORE WEEKS OF WINTER!
HEY! THERE'S NO MEDIA... NO CAMERAS... NO REPORTERS
1-31
...JUST ONE REALLY UGLY YARD GNOME
ARMSTRONG

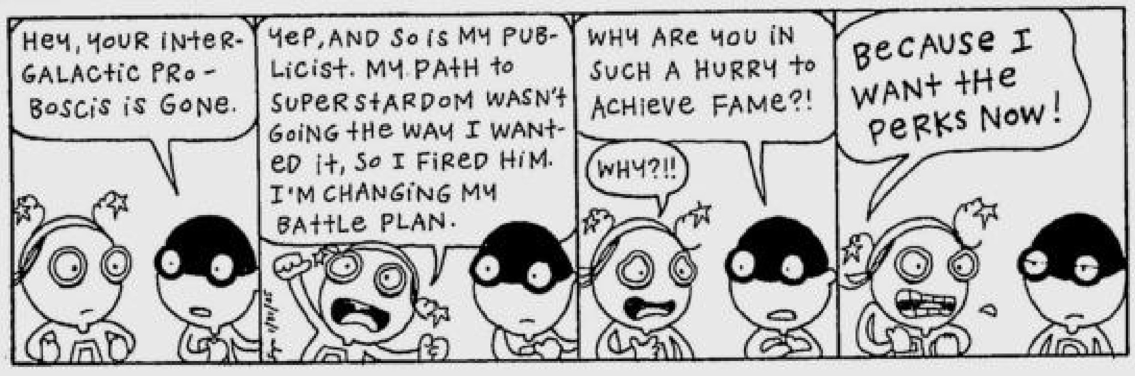
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HI.
HI.
WHAT'S NEW?
NOTHING.
WELL, I TAKE THAT BACK. AROUND THREE O'CLOCK THE KIDS DISCOVERED THAT ANYTHING VELCRO STICKS TO MY NEW SWEATPANTS.
THAT EXPLAINS A LOT.
AT LEAST WE FINALLY GOT THE TOY BOX CLEANED OUT.
www.babyblues.com

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, your inter-galactic pro-boscis is gone.
Yep, and so is my publicist. My path to superstardom wasn't going the way I wanted it, so I fired him. I'm changing my battle plan.
Why are you in such a hurry to achieve fame?!
Why?!!
Because I want the perks now!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: People admire and appreciate you. Perhaps this is because you respond so well to the spotlight. You enjoy attention, and you are highly entertaining. You're naturally attractive, and you have excellent social skills. You know how to bring people together. An important choice must be made this year. Choose wisely.
Birthdate of: Justin Timberlake, singer; Suzanne Pleshette, actress; Jackie Robinson, baseball player.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You want the help of a parent or someone in authority. Today you have a true appreciation for what someone else has to undergo.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You feel sympathy for people who suffer in distant lands. In a global sense, you live in a rich country. You appreciate this fact today.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You might want to share something you have with someone else. My grandfather used to say that you can only wear one coat at a time.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You feel sympathetic toward someone close to you today. You see that you might have failed to appreciate where someone else is coming from.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): If you help a coworker today, you will feel good. That is the irony of benefiting others. The true benefactor is always you!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): It is an undisputed fact that we rely on the kindness of others when we are young and again when we are old. Think how you can be kind to children and young people today. Consider it an opportunity.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Family is important. And yet family can be the source of strife. Today you see how you can help a family member, and this makes you feel good.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): There are many daily heroes in life. These are individuals who take the time to be gentle and friendly to whoever is standing right in front of them. Be that kind of hero today.

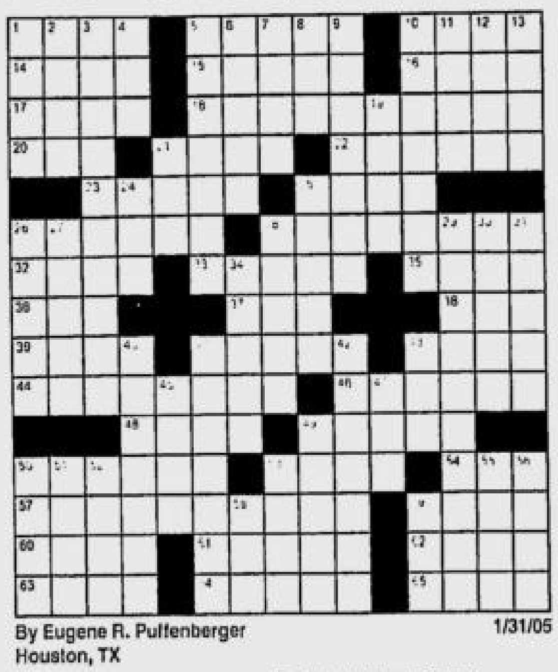
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Some people like money because it gives them security. You like money because it gives you freedom, fun, travel and adventure! Today, you want to share these advantages with others.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You feel inspired to be the best that you can be today. In doing so, you want to be tender and helpful to others. You're in touch with your human, caring heart.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): For some reason, you might have contact with large institutions, like the government, hospitals or prisons today. If so, you'll be able to do something significant for someone.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You feel very sympathetic toward a friend today. You want to help a person if you can. Your caring concern will no doubt be a comfort to this person.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Eugene R. Puffenberger
Houston, TX

1/31/05

ACROSS
1 Departed
5 Explosive stuff
10 Bar in a tub
14 School near Windsor
15 Charged particle
16 Strong inclination
17 Fourth-down option
18 Too casual?
20 Quirk
21 Judith or Dana
22 Boxer Marvin
23 Tree feller
25 Distinct region
26 __ Dome (1921 scandal)
28 Characters
32 __ breve
33 "Guitar Town" singer Steve
35 CNN word
36 Singer Zadora
37 Me in Metz
38 Xenon or neon
39 Say it __ so!
41 Sonar sounds
43 Pelvic bones
44 Making a second attempt
46 Hail
48 Aircraft: pref.
49 Of wine
50 Holy places
53 Ocean's rise and fall
54 Square root of four
57 Too casual?
59 From a great distance
60 Stand up
61 From now on
62 Weekend cowboy
63 Exile isle
64 Once more
65 Ersatz butter

DOWN
1 Cried
2 Ornamental case
3 Too casual?
4 Big bang letters?
5 Artlessness
6 More central of two
7 In good order
8 King of France
9 Toward the coast
10 O.R. doctor
11 Hurler Hershiser
12 Film critic from Tennessee
13 Tennis player Korda
19 Fires
21 __ Jima
24 Pollution patrol grp.
25 Woody Allen movie
26 Rain forest ungulate
27 Beethoven's "Fur __"
28 Antler tip
29 Too casual?
30 Be in store
31 Lamb piece
34 Essential acid type
40 Windpipe
41 Carnivorous fish
42 Small amount
43 Three
45 Abominable snowman
47 First grade
49 Leonardo da _
50 For certain
51 Blue dye
52 Plane-crash grp.
53 Singer Turner
55 Walk in water
56 Nabisco treat
58 Beer container
59 Time-wasting bother

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

C	R	E	A	M	S	O	D	A	■	T	I	B	B	S
R	I	N	T	I	N	T	I	N	■	O	N	R	Y	E
A	L	I	E	N	A	T	E	D	■	R	A	I	T	T
B	E	D	S	O	R	E	■	■	H	E	D	G	E	S
■	■	■	■	R	E	R	E	C	O	R	D	■	■	■
C	I	V	I	C	S	■	A	R	M	O	I	R	E	S
A	S	A	N	A	■	T	R	E	E	S	T	U	M	P
P	E	L	T	■	F	U	M	E	S	■	I	N	C	A
E	R	I	E	C	A	N	A	L	■	M	O	T	E	T
R	E	D	R	I	V	E	R	■	S	E	N	S	E	S
■	■	■	S	N	O	R	K	E	L	S	■	■	■	■
H	E	N	T	E	R	■	■	M	A	S	O	N	I	C
I	B	E	A	M	■	A	B	E	V	I	G	O	D	A
P	A	S	T	A	■	S	E	R	I	A	L	M	O	M
A	N	T	E	S	■	S	A	Y	C	H	E	E	S	E

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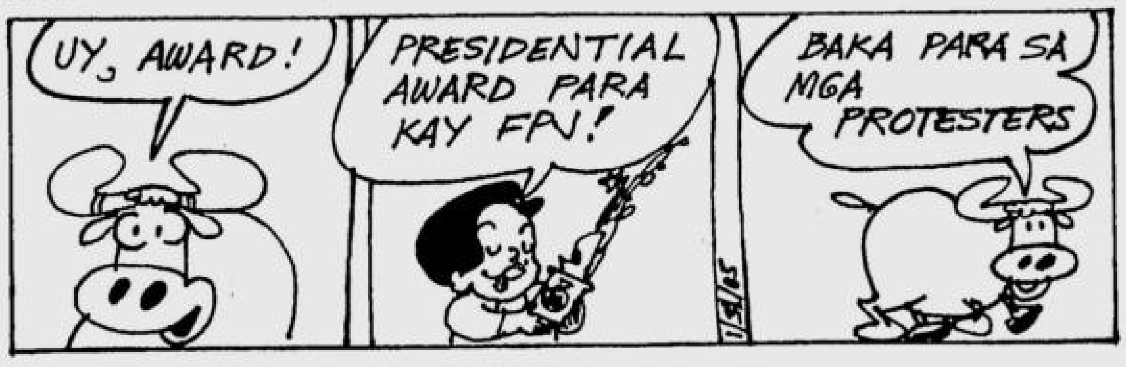
1/31/05

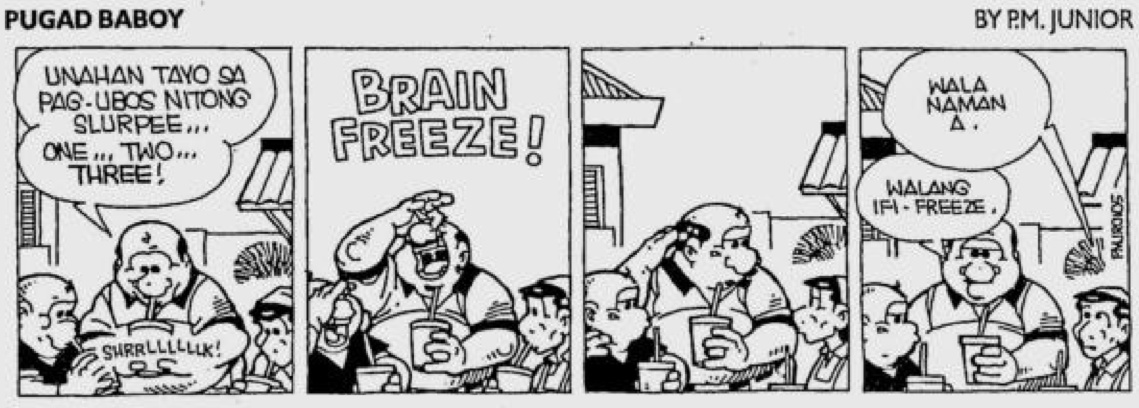
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


UY, AWARD!
PRESIDENTIAL AWARD PARA KAY FPJ!
BAKA PARA SA MGA PROTESTERS
1/31/05

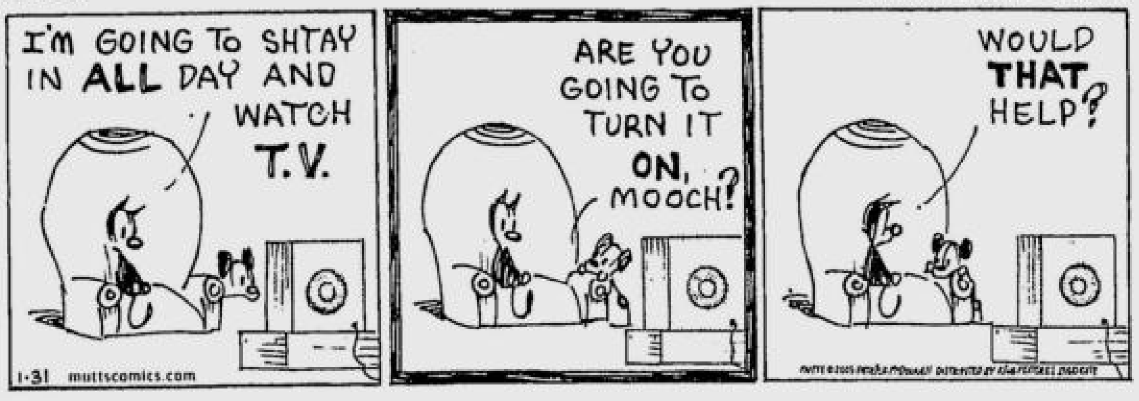
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


UNAHAN TAYO SA PAG-UBOS NITONG SLURPEE... ONE... TWO... THREE!
SHRRLLLLLLK!
BRAIN FREEZE!
WALA NAMAN A.
WALANG IFI-FREEZE.
PALRONOS

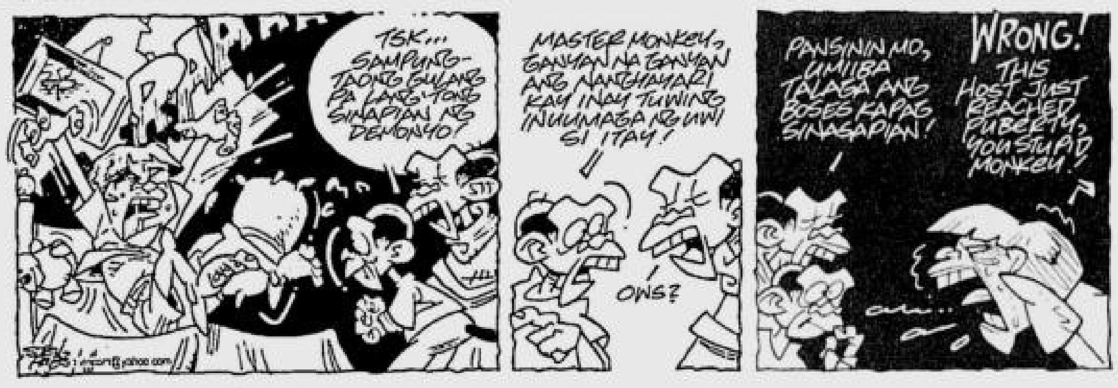
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I'M GOING TO SHTAY IN ALL DAY AND WATCH T.V.
ARE YOU GOING TO TURN IT ON, MOOCH?
WOULD THAT HELP?
1-31 muttscomics.com

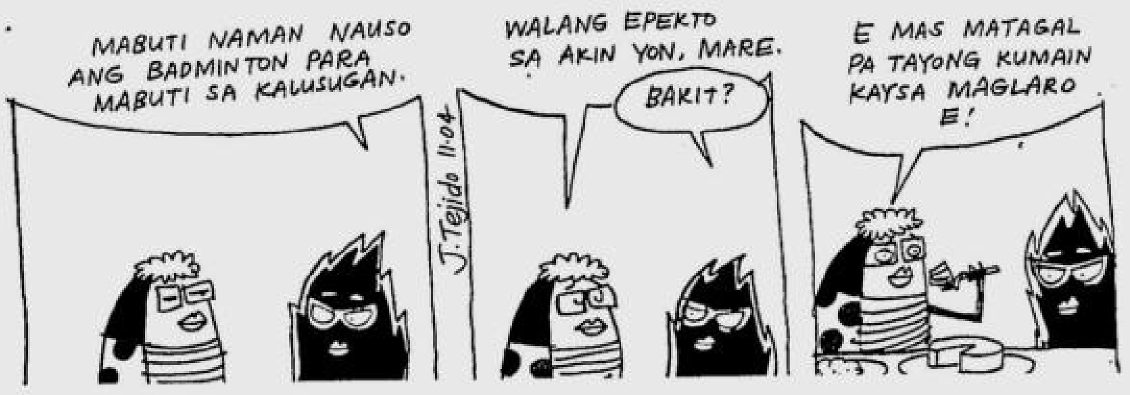
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


TSK... SAMPUNG-TAONG GULANG PA LANG 'TONG SINAPIAN NG DEMONYO!
MASTER MONKEY, GANYAN NA GANYAN ANG NANGYAYARI KAY INAY TUWING INUUMAGA NG UWI SI ITAY!
OWS?
PANSININ MO, UMIIBA TALAGA ANG BOSES KAPAG SINASAPIAN!
WRONG! THIS HOST JUST REACHED PUBERTY, YOU STUPID MONKEY!

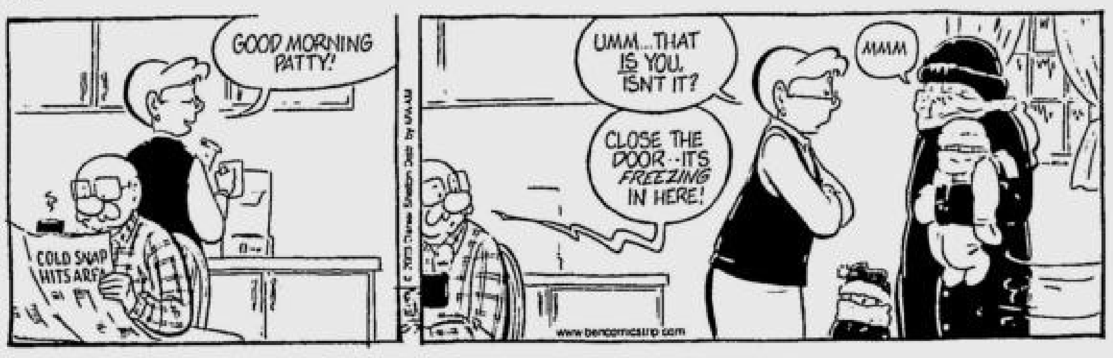
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MABUTI NAMAN NAUSO ANG BADMINTON PARA MABUTI SA KALUSUGAN.
J. Tejido 11-04
WALANG EPEKTO SA AKIN YON, MARE.
BAKIT?
E MAS MATAGAL PA TAYONG KUMAIN KAYSA MAGLARO E!

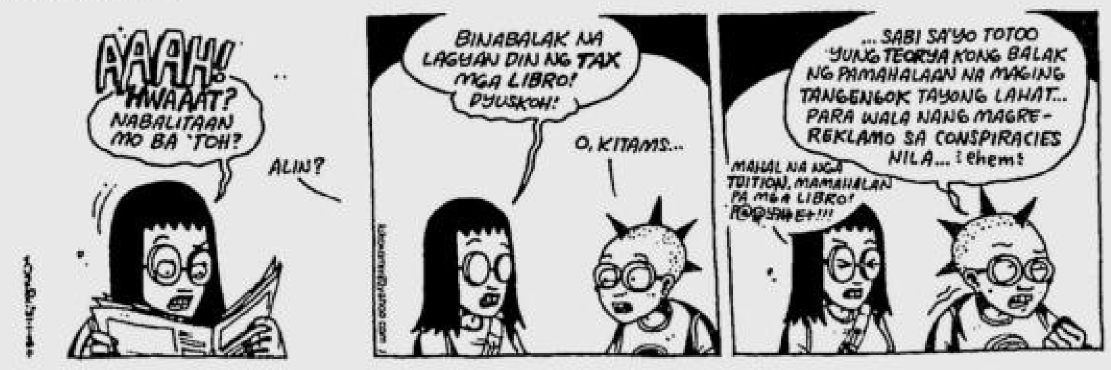
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


GOOD MORNING PATTY!
COLD SNAP HITS AREA
UMM...THAT IS YOU, ISNT IT?
MMM
CLOSE THE DOOR--ITS FREEZING IN HERE!
www.bencomicstrip.com

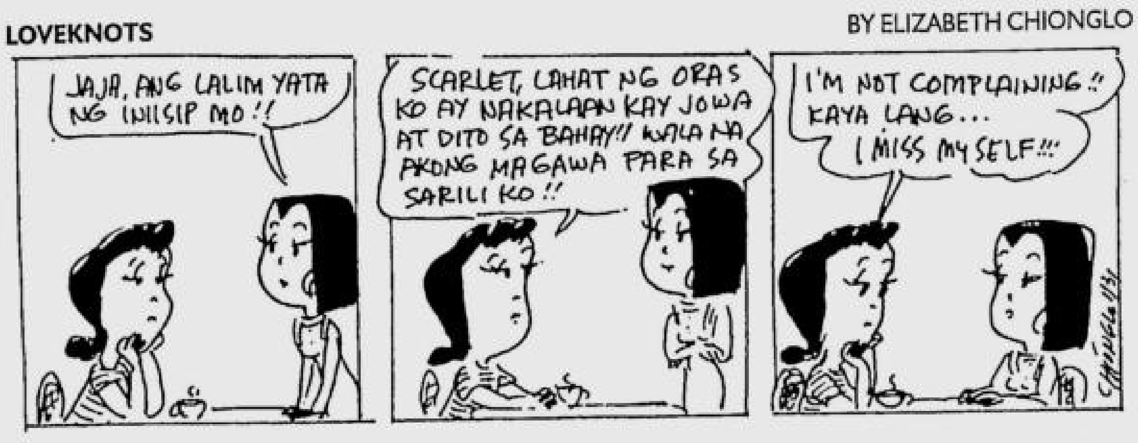
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


AAAH! HWAAAT? NABALITAAN MO BA 'TOH?
ALIN?
BINABALAK NA LAGYAN DIN NG TAX MGA LIBRO! DYUSKOH!
O, KITAMS...
...SABI SA'YO TOTOO 'YUNG TEORYA KONG BALAK NG PAMAHALAAN NA MAGING TANGENGOK TAYONG LAHAT... PARA WALA NANG MAGRE-REKLAMO SA CONSPIRACIES NILA... :ehem:
MAHAL NA NGA TUITION, MAMAHALAN PA MGA LIBRO! [illegible]!!!

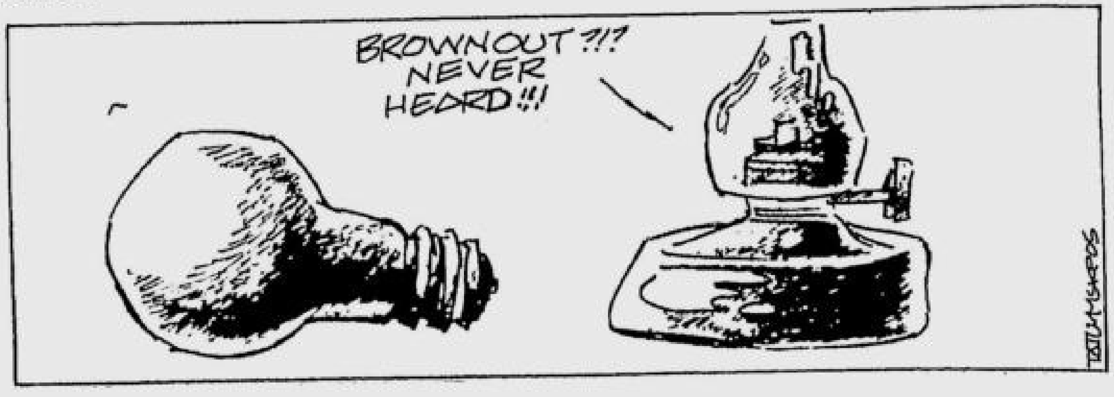
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, ANG LALIM YATA NG INIISIP MO!!
SCARLET, LAHAT NG ORAS KO AY NAKALAAN KAY JOWA AT DITO SA BAHAY!! WALA NA AKONG MAGAWA PARA SA SARILI KO!!
I'M NOT COMPLAINING!! KAYA LANG... I MISS MYSELF!!!
CHIONGLO 1/31

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


BROWNOUT ?!? NEVER HEARD!!!

JANICE: I'm happy

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

I'M A homebody," actress/TV host Janice de Belen admits. "I like watching DVDs, listening to love songs, and tinkering with the computer.

"*Pareho kaming* book lovers *ng lovey ko*," she adds, without identifying her "lovey." "He introduces me to books that he likes. We don't go out much. We don't have the time because he's in school everyday. Patient *naman ako* (I'm patient)."

Unlike her sister Gelli—who, two Mondays ago, shared with us in this section her fascination with shawls, high-heeled sandals and brooches—Janice says she would rather spend money on books than on clothes.

"To be honest, I don't really care if I use one outfit over and over," she explains in this interview in her five-bedroom condo unit in Greenhills, San Juan. "First of all, I wear something because I feel comfortable wearing it. Second, I have five kids. My life is not easy. If people see me wear an outfit repeatedly, I know they will understand."

BOOKS. "I'm interested in many things so I find it difficult to pick a favorite book. Right now, I'm into self-help books, like 'Instant Analysis' by David Lieberman. If I buy fiction, it has to be something so interesting that I can't put it down, like Dan Brown's 'Angels and Demons' and 'The Da Vinci Code' or Michael Crichton's 'Jurassic Park.' I also read books like 'The Road Less Traveled,' 'Book of Dreams,' even books on psychology, botany, biology and algebra. My Koran is a gift from Robin Padilla.

"I have stuff like 'Highly Sensitive Person,' 'The Angry Book,' 'Emotional Vampire,' 'Relationship Rescue' and 'Being Happy,' which I give away as gifts. I have reading materials in every part of the house, even in the bathroom. When I buy books, it takes me the same length of time that a shopaholic spends buying clothes. I like the store Books for Less, because they have good titles at cheaper prices. I also love Fully Booked, which allows me to reserve the books I want and then buy them when I have the money already."

TOILETRIES. "I like spending time in the bathroom. I like taking a bath. We didn't have a bathtub in our old house, so I only got to use one when we went abroad. I would soak for a long time. The bath [soaps and salts] that hotels provided were never enough. I would always bring my own.

"I'm also into body wash. I like going to Beauty Bar, Body Shop, Zen Zest, or Lush. You could leave me in those stores for a whole day. *Puro amoy amoy lang ang ginagawa ko* (I would sniff and sniff).

"I choose scents depending on my moods. For days when I like to smell fruity, I use orange sherbet, blueberry or similar scents. Sometimes I go for chocolate chip or vanilla-flavored body wash. I also have flower scents. Other times, it's goat's milk from Canus."

COSMETICS. "I'm really not like other *artistas* (movies stars). I'm not into cosmetics. I don't even use body lotion. My sister is really into makeup. You'll be shocked to see my makeup box, compared to hers. I buy cosmetics only because I need them for work. Sometimes, I use those that Gelli donated to me."

JANICE/ A2-5

OUT OF THE CLOSET

"HAPPINESS is being at peace with myself. Happiness is from within, you exude it, you can't buy it or fake it."

She can wear the same outfit again and again. She has high-heeled shoes, makeup and accessories only because she needs them for work. She'd rather buy books and body wash

FULLY BOOKED. She likes self-help volumes and has them and other kinds all over the house.

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Body Massage • Tatoo (eyebrow, upper & lower lid, lip) • Waxing (full legs, half legs, armpit)
Wart Removal • Hair Grower Treatment • Collagen Treatment • Slimming
Eyelash Perming • Dandruff Treatment • Eyebag Treatment • Foot Spa

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VIRTUES – WE'RE COMMITTED TO TEACH THEM, AND OUR STUDENTS ARE PROUD TO WEAR THEM.

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Memorable tribute to Pete Roa

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

RIGHT after our screenwriting class last Jan. 19, we rushed to Merk's Bar and Bistro at Greenbelt 3 for the tribute that **Pete Roa**'s friends were throwing for him on his 65th birthday.

When we went to Pete's table to extend our special birthday wishes, we found him and his wife, **Boots**, in animated conversation with **Imelda Romualdez-Marcos**, **Richard Merk**, **Pepe Pimentel**, and a number of TV executives, most of whom he worked with at ABS-CBN decades ago.

We found our own corner with **Bibsy Carballo**, **Ricky Davao**, **Pablo Tariman** and **Al Quinn**, and settled down to enjoy the evening's wall-to-wall bonhomie.

One of the event's highlights was a video tribute to Pete that recalled his start in the biz, his and Boots' elopement, his career as a media executive, his fine singing *ala* **Frank Sinatra**, the innovations he helped effect in the TV trade, the time when he produced **Elvira Manahan**'s "Two for the Road," etc.

We were especially touched by the loving praises Pete received in the video, not just from his wife, children and grandchildren but also from the members of his household staff.

But we were most impressed when the evening's musical soiree got underway. The band assembled for the impromptu singing session was made up of some of the best musicians in the land, and their exceptional accompaniment "pressured" the stars who sang that night to come up with their best performances.

We had to leave early because we had a full work schedule the following day. Pete and Boots understood, but we were especially sorry to go when, as we departed, comedy king **Dolphy** arrived.

Sharon, Maryo honored

LAST Jan. 13, Belgian Ambassador **Christiaan Tanghe** hosted an awarding ceremony to honor the Philippine winners at the 31st Brussels International Independent Film Festival—**Sharon Cuneta**, **Nora Aunor**, **Yul Servo** and director **Maryo de los Reyes**.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Tanghe observed, "By screening Philippine films, the Brussels festival shows its faith in the creativity of the professionals of the Filipino movie industry. Your directors and actors are regularly honored with prizes."

The Grand Prix Special du Jury was awarded to De los Reyes for "Naglalayag." "Magnifico," screened as the opening movie out of competition, was a huge success. Cuneta and Aunor were proclaimed best actresses for their performances in "Crying Ladies" and "Naglalayag," respectively. And the best actor award went to Servo for his portrayal in "Naglalayag." The Brussels filmfest's director is Robert Malengreau.

In conclusion, Ambassador Tanghe revealed that the 2005 edition of the Cine-Manila Film Festival this August will feature a tribute to the New Belgian Film.

Rachel Weisz, psychic cop

IN KEANU Reeves' latest starrer, "Constantine," Rachel Weisz plays a police officer who turns out

MEMORABLE/ A2-6

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2 (DTS) RAISE YOUR VOISE
3 (DOLBY) ELEKTRA
4 HAROLD & KUMAR

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4 HAUNTED SPIRIT-2

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2 HONEY
3 (DTS) HELLWOLFE
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2 ELEKTRA
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4 BLADE TRINITY

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2 KUNG FU HUSTLE
3 (DOLBY) BLADE TRINITY
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Jade Cinema
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1 (DOLBY EX) HAROLD & KUMAR
2 THE SIN
3 (DTS ES) ELEKTRA
4 IMPOTENT MAN

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 HAROLD & KUMAR
2 HAYOP SA PORMA HANEP SA GANDA
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4 (DTS) ELEKTRA

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 KUNG FU HUSTLE
2 THE GHOST
3 (DOLBY) BLADE TRINITY
4 (DTS) OCEAN'S TWELVE

Centre Plaza Cinema
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2 RAISE YOUR VOISE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 7953320
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2 WHITE NOISE
3 HONEY
4 AFTER THE SUNSET

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2 WHITE NOISE
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5 HONEY
6 MADHOUSE

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3 HONEY
4 WHITE NOISE
5 ELEKTRA
6 OUT OF REACH

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1 ELEKTRA
2 HAROLD AND KUMAR
3 IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN
4 BAD SANTA
5 2046
6 MAY

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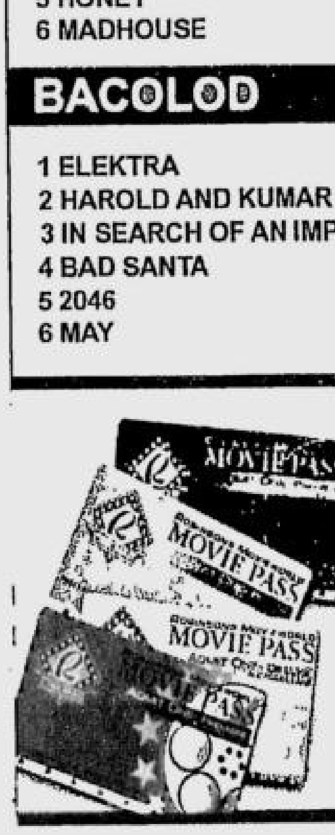
6 NED KELLY



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1	ELEKTRA	WHITE NOISE	ELEKTRA	GUARANTEED SEATS MEET THE FOCKERS 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:15, 11:45	ELEKTRA
2	MEET THE FOCKERS	ELEKTRA	MEET THE FOCKERS	GUARANTEED SEATS ELEKTRA 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00, 11:15	MEET THE FOCKERS
3	IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE	MEET THE FOCKERS	GUARANTEED SEATS MEET THE FOCKERS 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30	GUARANTEED SEATS MEET THE FOCKERS [illegible] 5:55, 8:25, 10:55	SUPER BABIES: BABY GENIUSES 2
4	OCEAN'S 12	KUNG FU HUSTLE	OCEAN'S 12	GUARANTEED SEATS IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30	KUNG FU HUSTLE
5	KUNG FU HUSTLE		KUNG FU HUSTLE	GUARANTEED SEATS OCEAN'S 12 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45, 12:00	
6			ELEKTRA		
7			WHITE NOISE		

	GB1 GREENBELT 1
1	MEET THE FOCKERS 12:05, 2:35, 5:05, 7:35, 10:05
2	ELEKTRA 11:15, 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30

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AYALA CENTER ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU LoveMall!

BAGGED. She prefers functional bags like this black leather number from Mango.

BAGGED AGAIN. The pink bag is a gift from her "lovey" who bought it in the US.

HIDING what should be hidden are the tops she prefers, like this pink one from Nullah, to which her 2-month-old chow chow puppy named Tyler clings.

Janice: I'm happy

From page A2-3

TOPS. "You'll notice that most of my blouses are quite long. First of all, I'm not sexy. The kind of clothes I have hides those that I want hidden. Second, I like Indian fashion. I don't know why, maybe because I'm fascinated with Indian culture. I love the sari and their henna!

"I have an Indian friend. I buy most of my stuff from her mom, Suman Gogna, who imports them. The clothes are kind of pricey, but authentic Indian fabric lasts long. They're very sturdy. In fact, I bought this salmon-colored top two years ago. *Maganda pa rin* (It still looks good).

"I also buy tops with similar design from Nullah and British India. The designs are very simple, *pero may dating* (but they have character). I guess it's the fabric that makes the outfits look good. *Hindi baduy* (They don't look cheap).

"On normal days, you will see me wearing just regular T-shirts, similar to the one I'm using right now. I like shirts that still look nice even if they're faded."

SKIRT. "I bought my favorite skirt from a side street in Bangkok.

EYEWEAR. "I bring my clear glasses everywhere I go. I use them for reading because I'm nearsighted.

"I had the racks for my eyeglasses specially made. Whenever I go to the Replay store, which provides most of my glasses, I always see the racks. If your glasses are placed on racks, more or less you know if something's missing. There's a system to it.

"I especially like one by Replay because of the dark tint. I like styles that are not too feminine; I prefer rectangular frames. And then there are glasses you wear for show, like this rounded purple pair."

PANTS. "I'm not very feminine when it comes to clothes. I'd rather wear slacks and jeans than dresses.

SHOES. "These two pairs of slip-ons are memorable. One time, while I was in Greenbelt, *napigtal yung suot ko* (the one I was wearing snapped). I wasn't shopping that day, but I had to buy another pair. I like them both because they're very versatile.

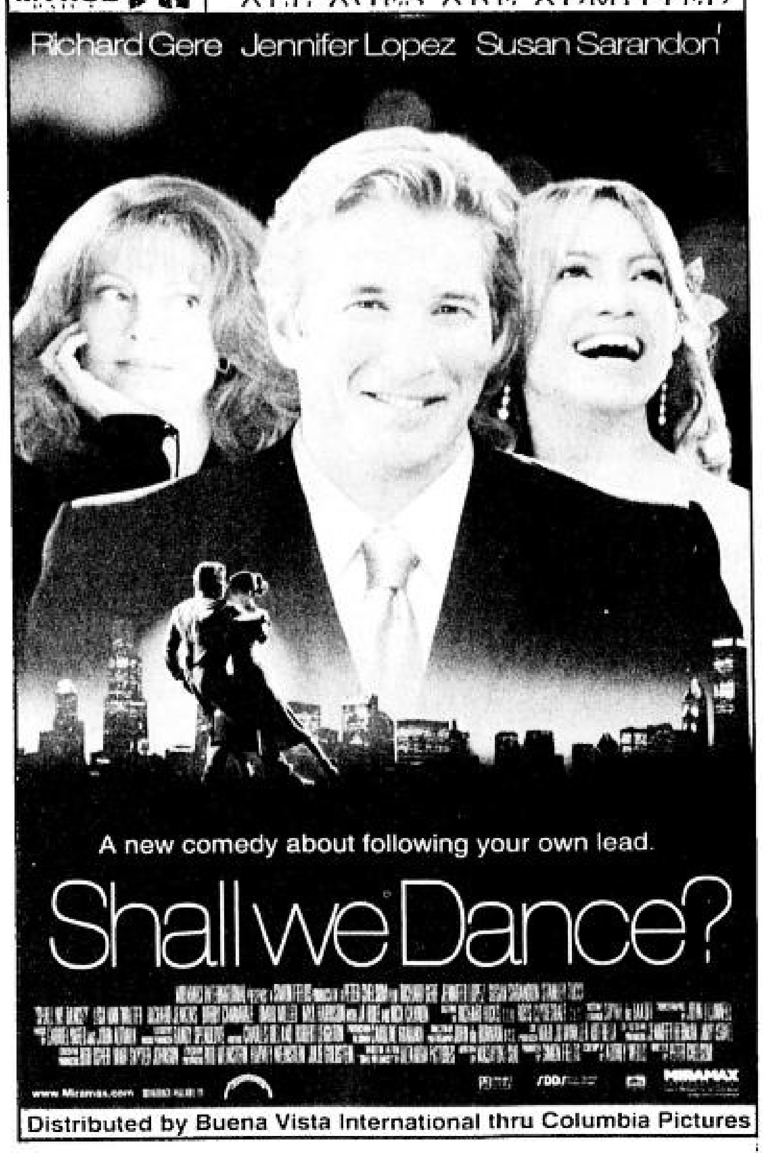
"I also own several pairs of boots, two of which I had specially made. They were copied from something I saw in a magazine. I wear them with dresses.

"This pair of leather boots is from Gelli. I used to borrow this for 'Sis' until one time, a friend told me that Mango just released a new pair that looked really okay. I asked my friend to buy it for me. When I saw it, *ang tulis pala* (it was too pointed)! I traded it for Gelli's boots.

Most of my sandals are from Wade.

JANICE/ A2-7

OPENS FEBRUARY 2 !
MTRCB RATING ▶ G | ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED



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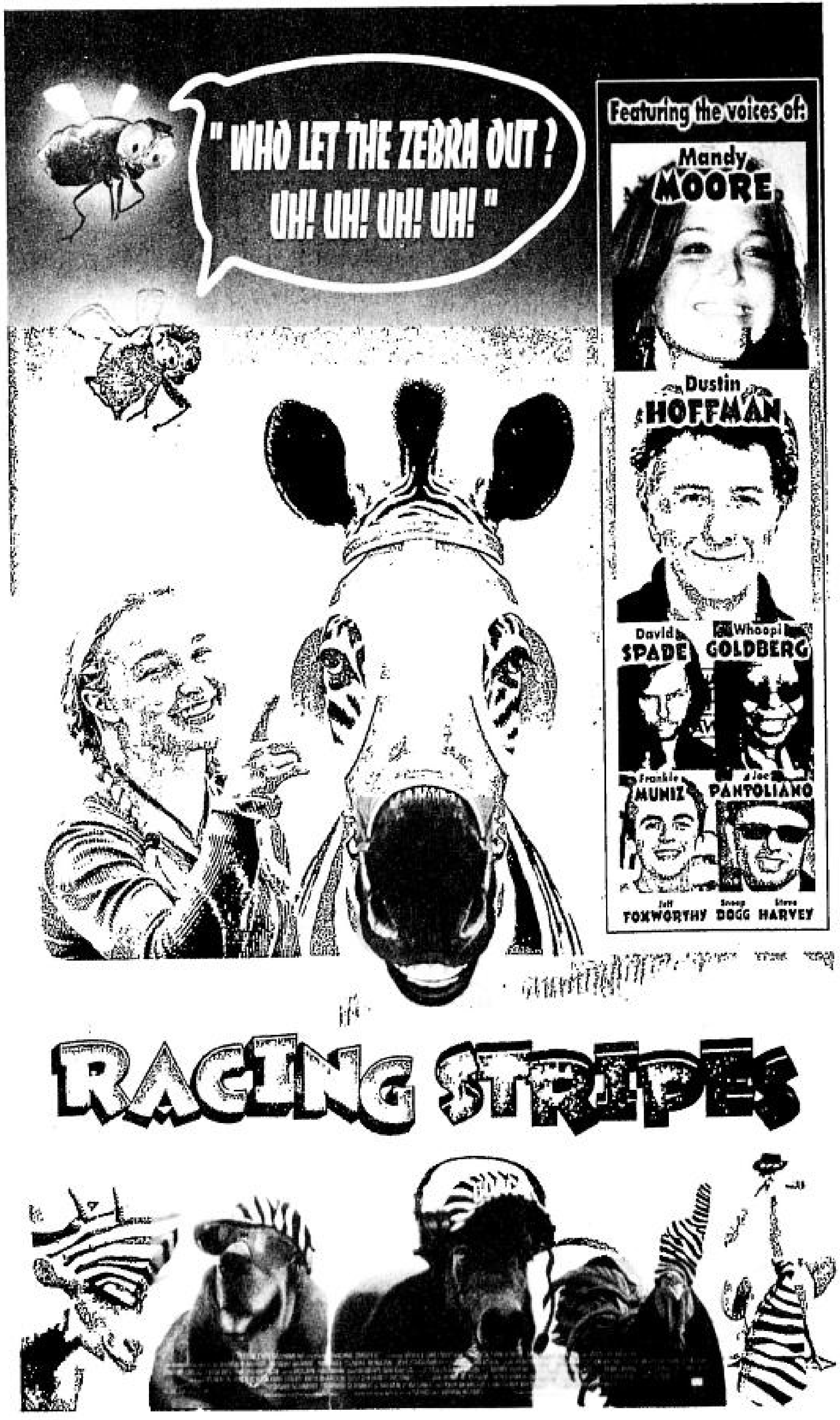

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FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "AMELIE"
A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT

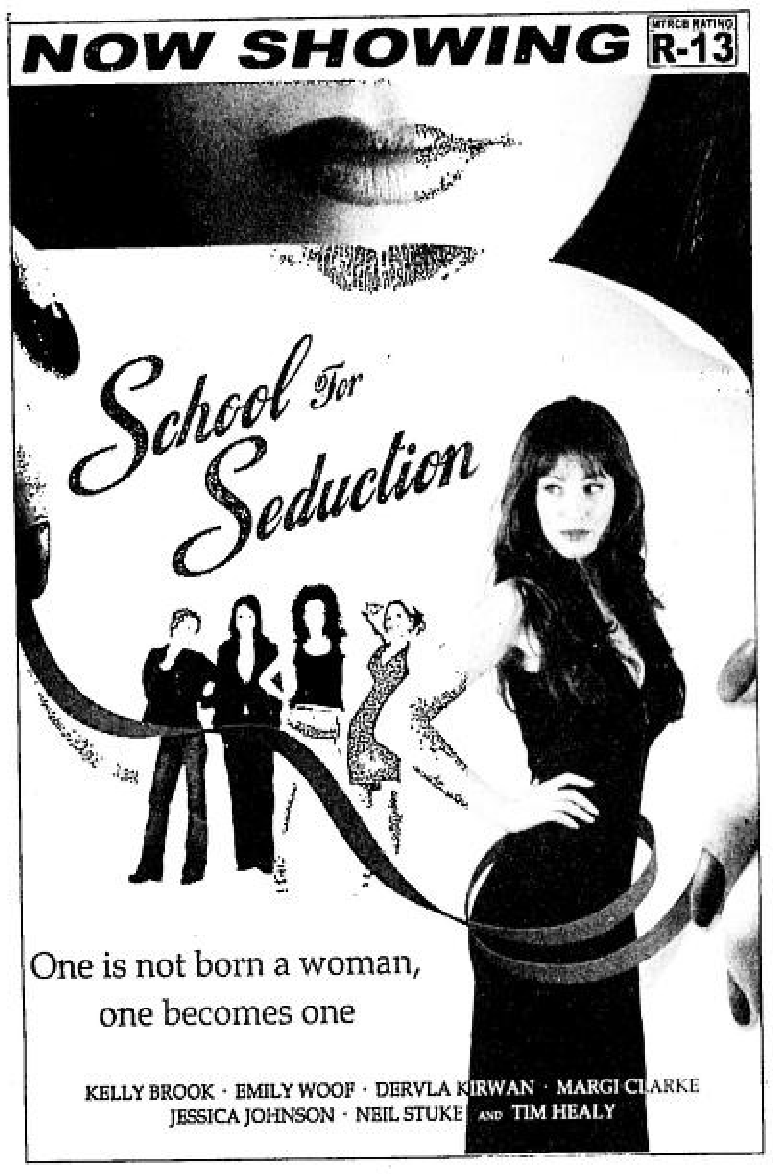
Asia, 'Sex Guru'

RUN FINGERS through the hair. Caress the cheek. Plant soft kisses on the shoulders. Keep the lights down and the soft music up. Perhaps have a little wine to keep spirits soaring.

The methods seem familiar, if not outright cliché. And if you've got nothing else up your sleeve to keep your partner humming and grinning 'till the morning light, well, time to look for new things elsewhere. "Sex Guru" would make a first good stop.

The instructional video puts the grrr back in the bedroom with new and refreshing pointers in the art of sensual message. It will teach you how to apply the right touch in the back, the legs, and the neck and the most exquisite areas in a very stimulating manner. But the key to all these techniques is knowing your partner well, says the video. One is also encouraged to experiment and explore.

Hotbabe Asia Agcaoili (above) acts as host. "Sex Guru" is available on DVD for P299 and VCD for P199, starting Jan. 27, from Viva Video.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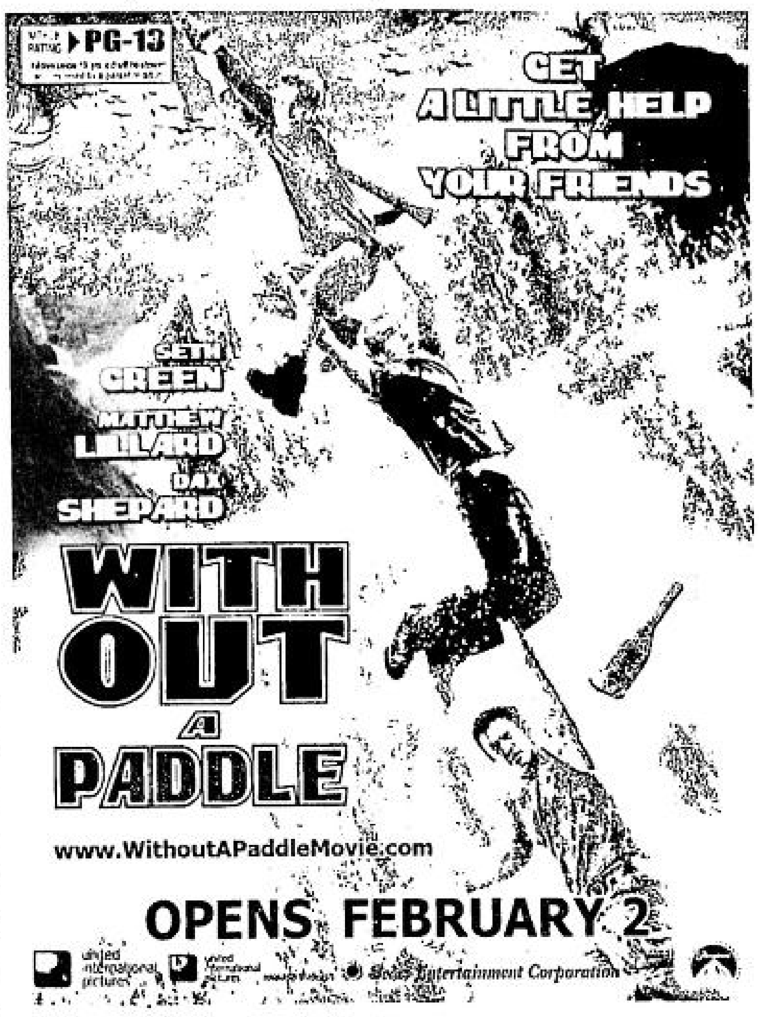
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OPENS FEBRUARY 2
Sony Entertainment Corporation

'GMA has plans…

From page A2-1

President's representatives were known to have begun to sound out industry leaders to determine how the government could help. After the consultations, several projects were lined up, the most promising of which is the establishment of the Sound Stage in Subic.

"The important thing is that the President has a plan, and she wants it implemented," the show biz insider said.

"The Sound Stage will not be finished overnight, but it represents the commitment of this government to help the film industry. And that already is an accomplishment."

The government did not give incentives to participants in last year's Metro Manila Film Festival, but the President's people have assured movie industry leaders that as soon as the fiscal situation improves, perhaps as early as the middle of next year, more projects benefiting the entertainment sector would be launched.

According to a Malacañang insider, the President has been asking the Optical Media Board, chaired by actor Edu Manzano, for updates on the campaign against piracy.

"Ms Arroyo wants to know how the campaign is going, and if the OMB needs a bigger budget to make the campaign more effective," the insider said.

Ms Arroyo is also said to be fully supporting the Film Development Council, headed by actress/filmmaker Laurice Guillen.

The council's film rating arm, the Cinema Evaluation Board, screens films for music, screenplay, direction, editing and other cinematic aspects to determine those that merit tax rebates.

Films given an A rating get a 100-percent rebate.

A B rating means a 65 percent rebate.

Tribute to Pete Roa

From page A2-1

to be a very powerful psychic. She helps Reeves' character solve the mysterious death of her twin sister, and their investigation takes them through the world of demons and angels that exists beneath the landscape of Los Angeles.

Weisz's research for the role included sessions with a police consultant for instruction in gun-handling, and a local psychic. Her cop character goes through a huge transformation in the course of the sci-fi suspense thriller, from being an unbeliever and cynic to ultimately rediscovering the psychic powers she's been repressing since childhood.

On the strong chemistry between Reeves and Weisz, producer **Lauren Shuler-Donner** observes, "They play two intense people who have both devoted their lives to fighting evil, she with the law and he in his own way, so it's natural that they would be drawn together. On a very basic level, they are similar and understand each other, and our two stars further intensify this unique relationship with their performances."

ETHAN HAWKE & LAURENCE FISHBURNE

Assault on Precinct 13

"Non-stop action"

From Rouge Pictures, a division of Universal Pictures comes the $50m budgeted remake of John Carpenter's classic action movie ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13.

This urban action flick is the Western of the modern era, with hoodlums and gang-bangers replacing the outlaws and rustlers of the Old West. The law, of course, has remained the law, with police detectives and patrolmen taking over for the sheriffs and marshals.

In 1976, John Carpenter's boxoffice hit *Assault on Precinct 13* famously linked cops and cowboys by updating the 1959 John Wayne Western, *Rio Bravo*, to the Los Angeles of the 1970s. Instead of outlaws trying to spring their leader from a frontier jail cell, it was a drug gang laying siege to an isolated police precinct. The first *Assault on Precinct 13* never achieved a cult status and remains the best Carpenter movie.

The new *Assault on Precinct 13* is a gritty, violent, fast-paced ,non stop action film, bolstered by competent stars headed by Ethan Hawke, Laurence Fishburne, Maria Bello, John Leguizamo, Gabriel Bryne and top rapper JA Rule.

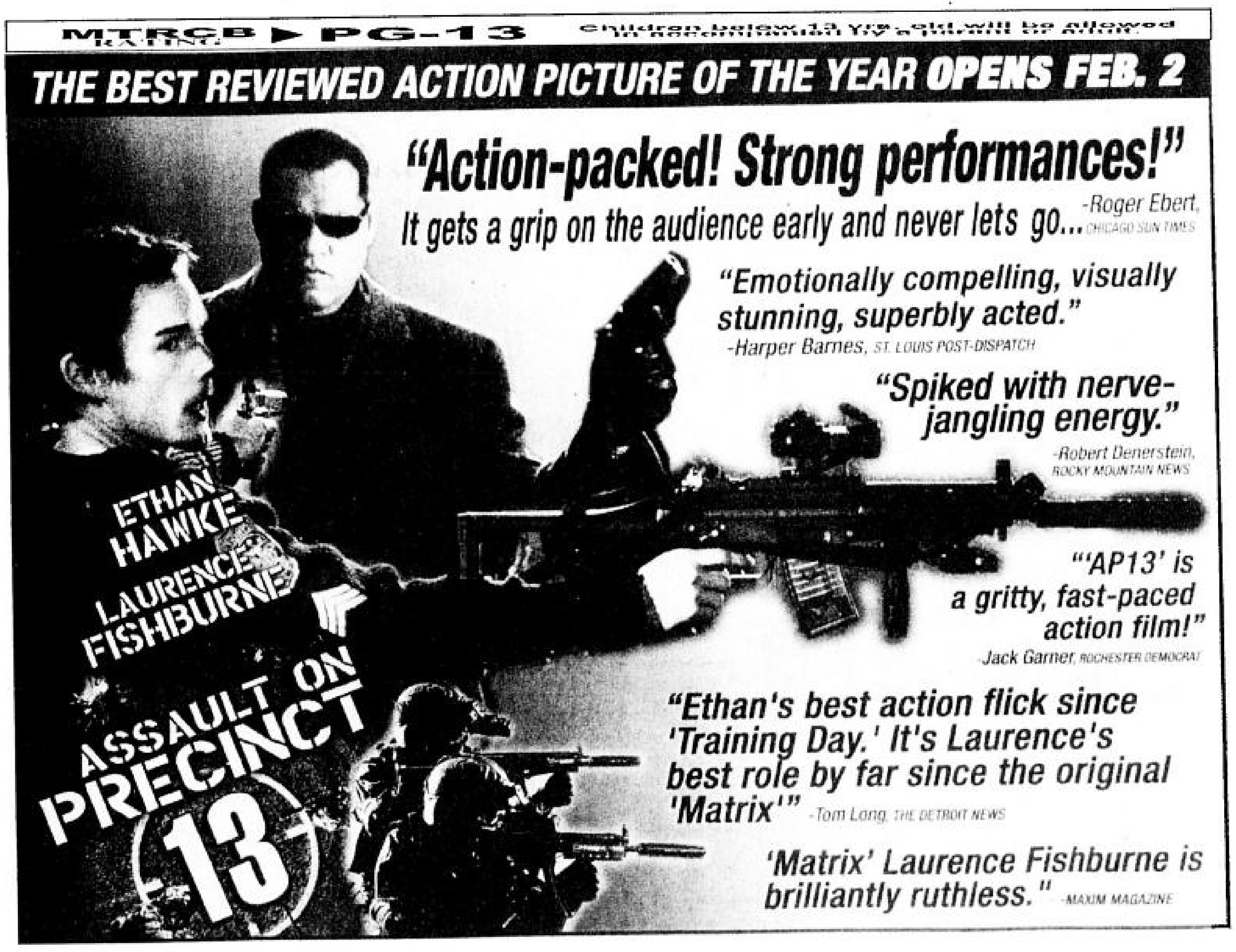
Jake Roenick (Ethan Hawke of Training Day) is a cop carrying guilt for an undercover drug bust that went wrong several months earlier, resulting in the deaths of fellow officers. He now draws desk duty.

The film opens as Roenick arrives for his last night at Precinct 13, a decrepit Detroit facility that's closing. Most of the precinct's equipment and staff have already been reassigned. It's New Year's Eve, and Roenick oversees a skeleton crew, including a retiring veteran (Brian Dennehy) and a party-girl secretary (Drea de Matteo), who's eager to get to holiday festivities.

A brutal snowstorm forces a prisoner transit bus to-stop at 13, and its inmate passengers are herded into 13's battered old jail cells because the city is virtually shut down by the storm. The precinct's temporary prisoners include a Detroit gangster named Bishop (Laurence Fishburne of Matrix).

The precinct is soon under assault by corrupt cops who need to kill Bishop before he exposes them. Ultimately, Roenick needs to arm the prisoners as well as his staff, as an act of self-preservation. •

ADVT


MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed in accompanied by a parent or adult
THE BEST REVIEWED ACTION PICTURE OF THE YEAR OPENS FEB. 2
"Action-packed! Strong performances!" It gets a grip on the audience early and never lets go... -Roger Ebert, CHICAGO SUN TIMES
"Emotionally compelling, visually stunning, superbly acted." -Harper Barnes, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH
"Spiked with nerve-jangling energy." -Robert Denerstein, ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS
"'AP13' is a gritty, fast-paced action film!" -Jack Garner, ROCHESTER DEMOCRAT
"Ethan's best action flick since 'Training Day.' It's Laurence's best role by far since the original 'Matrix'" -Tom Long, THE DETROIT NEWS
'Matrix' Laurence Fishburne is brilliantly ruthless." -MAXIM MAGAZINE
ETHAN HAWKE
LAURENCE FISHBURNE
ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13

MTRCB RATING ▶R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP
OPENS FEBRUARY 2
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "AMELIE"
When she was a young girl, Mathilde met Manech, the son of the local lighthouse keeper. As time passed, the two became inseperable lovers.
Though torn apart by war, Manech can feel Mathilde's heartbeat in his palm... and each beat brings her closer to him.
AUDREY TAUTOU
A FILM BY JEAN-PIERRE JEUNET
A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
www.verylongengagement.co.uk

INDIAN IS IN. She likes Indian fashion, such as this salmon-hued long top.

INDIAN, TOO. This top came from the same Indian supplier. Behind her mom is Kyla, 9.

BATH TIME. You can leave her in shops like Beauty Bar, Body Shop, Zen Zest, or Lush and "I would sniff and sniff."

FLAVORED MOODS. She uses scents—from orange sherbet and blueberry to chocolate chip or vanilla—depending on her mood.

SHADES FOR SHOW. She likes styles that are not too feminine, but she also has eyeglasses she wears for show.

SISTER'S SHOES. This pair of leather boots is from Gelli, which she traded for a newly bought pair that she found too pointed.

Janice: I'm happy

From page A2-5

If I have time to choose from what Wade has, I don't pick stilettos. I prefer wedges because they're not too feminine and they don't hurt my legs. I have stilettos only because I need them.

"The rubber shoes I'm wearing are my daughter's. We have the same shoe size. *Swerte ko* (I'm so lucky)! I get to borrow from them."

BAGS. "I prefer bags that are functional, like this black leather number from Mango. It has plenty of pockets. I just bought it last December.

"This pink bag is a gift from my *lovey*. He bought this in the US last January. It looks good with jeans.

"I also like wallets with many pockets. I want to be able to bring all my credit cards, ATM cards and discount cards wherever I go. I've been using my Nine West wallet since June."

ACCESSORIES. "I make my own. I wear them not because I want to, but because I need them for work. "I also do cross-stitch. I give them to friends as gifts. *Pinaghirapan talaga* (Labor of love)."

Breaker

"Love just happens," declares Janice of her new love whom she found more than two years after her 10-year marriage to actor John Estrada ended.

"You can never tell your heart to be ready. I didn't look for love. *Nabigla nga ako* (I was taken by surprise). Now I realize that a relationship will work only if the person you're with is someone you've prayed for," she tells INQUIRER Entertainment.

But Janice says she would rather keep the special someone's identity to herself, because, "after all, he's not from show biz."

"I'm happy," she says, as though she can't stress it enough. "Each person has his own benchmark for happiness. For me, happiness is being at peace with myself. Happiness is from within, you exude it, and you can't buy it or fake it. You can't get it from other people. I may not be the richest person, I may not own everything that I want to have, but I'm happy."

When not busy with "Sis," the talk show she co-hosts with younger sister Gelli and Carmina Villaroel on GMA 7, Janice usually stays home.

Give Thanks
to the Lord
for His love
endures
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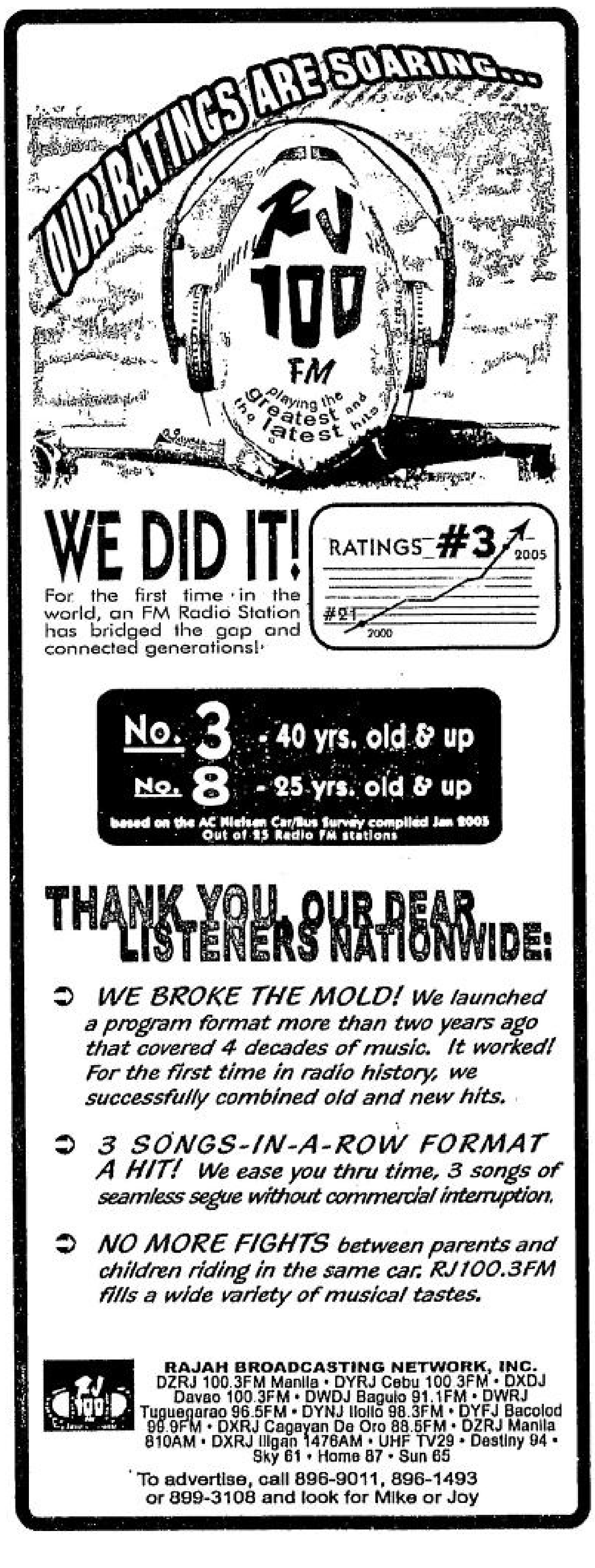
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BSP chief says peso can reach 53:$1

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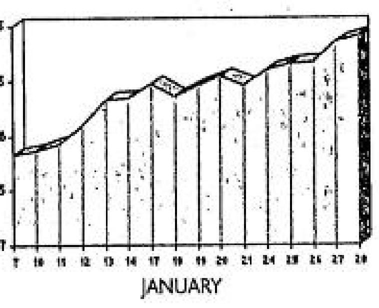

P 55.09 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 28, 2005

¥ 103.19 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 28, 2005

GOLD: $ 427.50-428.00

per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 27, 2005

By Doris C. Dumlao

GOVERNOR Rafael Buenaventura of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas sees the peso appreciating further to the 53 level against the US dollar this year if the government can meet its commitment to raise P80 billion in fresh annual revenues.

Buenaventura stressed that foreign funds were pouring back into the country, with net portfolio inflow surging to $427.2 million in the first three weeks of January.

"This represents a very strong opening for the year, particularly in comparison to the $12.9 million cumulative net inflow for the comparable period in 2004 and the $486.8 million figure for the whole of 2004," Buenaventura said.

The peso closed at 55.09 on Friday after hitting a high of 55.03:$1, indicating that a breakout into the 54 level may happen very soon, currency traders said.

The local currency, which stood at 56.34 at end-December, has thus gained more than P1 since the start of the year.

Asked about his fearless forecast for the rest of 2005, Buenaventura told reporters: "If there are really lots of inflow and if we achieve the reforms on the fiscal side there really is no reason why we shouldn't be below 54:$1."

He said the local currency should strengthen past P54 if the government could get enough tax reform measures passed to generate P80 billion. Likewise to work on the peso's favor would be the privatization of the generation and transmission assets of National Power Corp., he said.

All throughout the region, Buenaventura also said the market was bullish on Asian currencies because of the expectation that China may be forced to free the yuan from its peg to the US dollar.

With foreign inflow returning to the country, Buenaventura said the BSP may be able to maintain its foreign reserves at the $16-billion level this year.

Of the gross "hot" money inflow since the start of the year, about 61 percent went to the Philippine

BSP/ B3

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Downgrade won't affect RP credit standing abroad, says US bank

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINES still enjoys the confidence of the foreign credit market, despite the blow of a credit rating downgrade, according to US-based investment bank Bear, Stearns & Co. Inc.

The investment firm also said that the country is safe from liquidity problems, at least in the short run.

"We see little likelihood that the Philippines will face a foreign liquidity crisis in the near term—given its strong external performance—or produce a default scenario," Bear, Stearns said in its latest paper on the Philippine economy.

The one-notch downgrade, from BB to BB-, by ratings firm Standard & Poor's was not all that bad for the country because the market had expected a two-notch decline in the country's long-term foreign debt rating, the bank said.

It added that the decision of S&P to retain its "stable" outlook on the Philippines was received positively by the market.

An outlook of "stable" means that the country's credit rating is not facing a possible downgrade in the near term.

Last week, the Philippine government was able to sell $1.5 billion worth of dollar-denominated global bonds during a debt offering which was well received by foreign bond investors. The market practically shrugged off the recent credit downgrade and scrambled for the RP debt papers, which would mature in 2030.

The government originally planned to borrow only $1 billion, but the high volume of bids encouraged it to raise $1.5 billion from the debt offering. Tenders for the recent bond float reached $8 billion. The government was able to sell the bonds at a yield of 9.7 percent.

"We see more value in the longer end of the Philippines' sovereign bond curve, which tends to be favored by offshore investors, although we note that domestic investors prefer to stay in the shorter-dated Philippines '09s and '11s (bonds maturing in 2009 and 2011), owing to greater liquidity of these issues," the bank said.

According to Bear, Stearns, the international capital market was also encouraged by the government's positive fiscal data for 2004. Last year, the national government's budget deficit stood at only P186.1 billion, or way below the official target of P197.8 billion.

The country's GDP for last year was estimated to reach 6.2 percent, or higher than the target of 4.9 to 5.8 percent. The actual GDP figure for 2004 will be announced today.

DOF: VAT passage will bring down deficit

THE NATIONAL government's budget deficit for 2005 may be further reduced from the newly revised target of P180 billion when Congress passes the hotly contested bill raising the value-added tax (VAT) rate from 10 to 12 percent.

The Department of Finance said the revenue from the proposed VAT hike had not been taken into account when the budget deficit target was lowered from the original P184.5 billion due to the passage of the sin taxes law and some administrative measures.

With the VAT increase, the Arroyo administration is expecting P35 billion in additional revenue each year. If the bill gets past Congress early in the year, the government's deficit picture may improve to P145 billion. This may also further accelerate the attainment of the zero-deficit goal, which the government set at 2010.

"Our fiscal assumptions for 2005 still do not include the increase in VAT," outgoing Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong told reporters. "If our reform program will be implemented, we can further improve on our deficit."

In February, Amatong will be replaced by Cesar Purisima.

But the Arroyo administration has met strong opposition over the proposed VAT hike. While the House has already passed the bill, critics have vowed to block its passage in the Senate.

They said the VAT increase would be too much of a burden for consumers.

They described the VAT hike, which is expected to generate the biggest revenue among the Arroyo administration's tax proposals, as an anti-poor measure because the VAT would be passed on by businesses to consumers.

But Amatong said the government would include safety nets should the VAT hike be implemented. She said agricultural products and basic food items would be excluded from the tax. *Michelle V. Remo*

Do something about ATM raps, BSP urges bankers

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has urged local banks to address snowballing consumer complaints over automated teller machine (ATM) charges.

In a speech before the Bank Marketing Association of the Philippines, BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the BSP had been swamped with complaints over ATMs, particularly on the deductions made for the use of the machines.

He urged bank officials to initiate the posting of ATM charges in all their branches.

By making the fees more transparent, the consumer may decide whether or not to use a particular machine, he said.

Tetangco also proposed the creation of a "grievance mechanism" to process complaints.

While banks do not charge the use of ATMs by their own account holders, they slap varying fees when their machines are used by depositors of other banks. While there is interconnection between some of the ATM networks, the charge goes even higher when another network is used.

After the speech, Tetangco told reporters the BSP could not compel the banks to lower the ATM fees as the institution could not intervene in free-market pricing. At the very least, he said, consumers must be protected by making fees and charges transparent.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura himself is pushing for the merger of the three ATM networks in the country—BancNet, Megalink and ExpressNet—to boost efficiency and savings.

Tetangco also reminded the banks to comply with the new regulations on credit card collection. While the BSP does not condone credit card defaults, it also did not favor illegal collection methods, he stressed.

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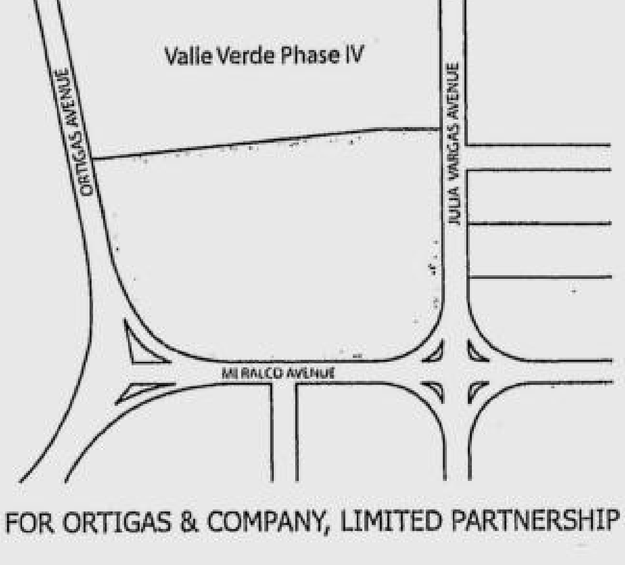

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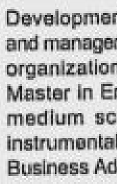

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CAP-ital plight

FOR A financial institution ready to lend $300 million halfway around the world, "First American Investments Ltd.," the reported white knight of the floundering College Assurance Plan Group, maintains such a low profile that it does not even maintain a web address.

In fact, there is no "First American Investments Ltd." in any Google or Yahoo! search at all.

There is a First American Investment Funds, a First American Services Group, a First American Investment Banking Corp., a First American Investment (a small real estate company in Arizona), and a First American Investments, listed in the "RipOff Report" as a telemarketing scam.

According to INQUIRER SEC reporter Elizabeth Sanchez, CAP gave the Securities and Exchange Commission a California address for its little-known American savior.

If this is correct, the closest thing the web search offers is a "First American Investments LLC," a mortgage banker specializing in real estate loans, with an office address in Stanton, a three-square mile city in Orange County that tourists drive through to reach Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, and the beaches.

According to the Switchboard Yellow Pages, First American Investments' neighboring businesses in the Stanton address include a meditation center, a car repair shop, and the state horse racing board.

Hauled over the coals

THE HEAD of the Philippine Stock Exchange disclosure department, Pamela Quizon-Labayen, wrote to Semirara Coal Corp. to inquire about Friday's report in this column, specifically about the allegation that the country's largest coal mine has not publicly disclosed two court cases that covers a tenth of its mining claim.

Semirara wrote back, pointing that as early as October 2004, the company had already submitted to Labayen's department disclosure statements on the pending two court cases.

The PSE disclosure department apparently shelved the two reports, deeming them unimportant to have them posted in the Semirara page, despite their potential adverse impact on the mining company's revenues.

Semirara corporate secretary Alfonso Ruiz II also reported that the same information had been detailed in the offering prospectus handed out to international investors.

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

Strangely, those very same disclosures were omitted in the publicly available quarterly and annual reports submitted by Semirara, which is partly owned and represented in the board by the government's National Development Co., to the PSE.

Buffeted by hungry fans

LE Soufflé Ortigas had to turn away scores of customers after lunch Friday after food run out despite what was supposed to have been an all-day, 27-dish farewell buffet.

Chef Jessie Sincioco had to send assistants to the market posthaste to restock the kitchen in time for dinner.

For P500/head, unlimited wine and drinks included, waves of fans paid the ultimate tribute, returning to the food-laden tables again and again, savoring the last gustatory delight of their five-year romance with the French bistro-café before it closed a culinary chapter in Ortigas.

A victim of escalating rent, Le Soufflé has found a new shelter in Rockwell, where it shall operate the Fernando's restaurant starting on Feb. 8. The exclusive club, according to the grapevine, has decided to open the new Le Soufflé to non-members as well.

And to the orphaned expats of the Asian Development Bank and nearby residents, Le Soufflé just might return to an Ortigas address, as early as next year perhaps, as five landlords have already propositioned Sincioco after news of her rent-induced diaspora came out.

Heard through the grapevine

TAIPAN George Ty has been elected to the board of the Shanghai World Financial Center, at 101 stories and 492 meters is destined to become the world's tallest building when it opens in 2008.

The taipan has personally been invited to the Shanghai project by no less than Minoru Mori, the Japanese real estate magnate that controls the sprawling Mori Building Group of Japan.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

OFW remittances seen growing 10%

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas expects dollar inflow from overseas Filipino workers to grow by 10 percent to about $9.3 billion over the 2004 estimate, beating its own conservative single-digit target.

In an interview, BSP Assistant Governor Diwa Guinigundo said: "The current projection is still 6 percent (growth) but given the positive outlook it could be 10 percent."

Guinigundo said the latest outlook on OFW remittances was based on an estimated level of $8.3 billion for 2004.

The BSP's most recent actual figure was only for the January-November period, wherein OFW inflow hit $7.7 billion or about 11 percent better than a year ago.

"We think the deployment of workers will continue. There's continuous demand for OFW services particularly in medical services and care-giving," Guinigundo said.

"Also, their incomes are increasing so the remittances are also rising," he added.

Asked whether the sharp appreciation of the peso in recent weeks could be a disincentive for OFWs to remit their dollars, Guinigundo said: "When the peso is appreciating, all the more they should send because there's a need to convert right away."

The growing number of Filipinos working abroad has encouraged Philippine commercial banks to widen their reach in countries where large OFWs are deployed by increasing the number of bank remittance centers abroad. Local banks are likewise strengthening and establishing tie-ups with overseas financial service firms and non-bank money couriers.

The United States, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom remained as the Philippines' major sources of OFW remittances.

The BSP is mapping out a comprehensive program to encourage OFWs to course their remittances through formal channels and invest in small and medium enterprises.

Through the years, the Philippines has been relying on huge remittances from OFWs to boost domestic consumer demand. In 2003, OFW remittances pumped in $7.64 billion to the domestic economy.

Relative to the size of the country's economy, the amount of OFW inflow is now equivalent to about 10.5 percent of gross domestic product. Also, it now accounts for about 20 percent of the value of the country's export of goods and services and about 1.8 times the value of net electronic exports.

BSP chief says peso . . .

From page B1

Stock Exchange while 39 percent went to fixed income instruments such as government securities.

Foreign buying has lifted the PSE composite index past the 2000 mark for the first time in five years.

Buenaventura said the strong inflow despite the BSP's decision to maintain key interest rates at the same levels since July 2003 proved that the differentials were still comfortable despite the US Federal Reserve's own series of rate tightening.

While the BSP has kept its overnight borrowing or reverse repurchase rate at 6.75 percent and the overnight lending or repurchase rate at 9 percent, treasury bill rates have adjusted upwards.

"When the differential was lower, the peso was in fact lower. The peso is driven not just by interest differentials but by a lot of things—perception on fiscal position, credit downgrade, ability to deliver on our tax reform measures," Buenaventura said.

For the first three weeks of 2004, nonresident investments in PSE-listed securities and in government securities/money market instruments resulted in substantial net inflow of $263.3 million and $190.5 million, respectively.

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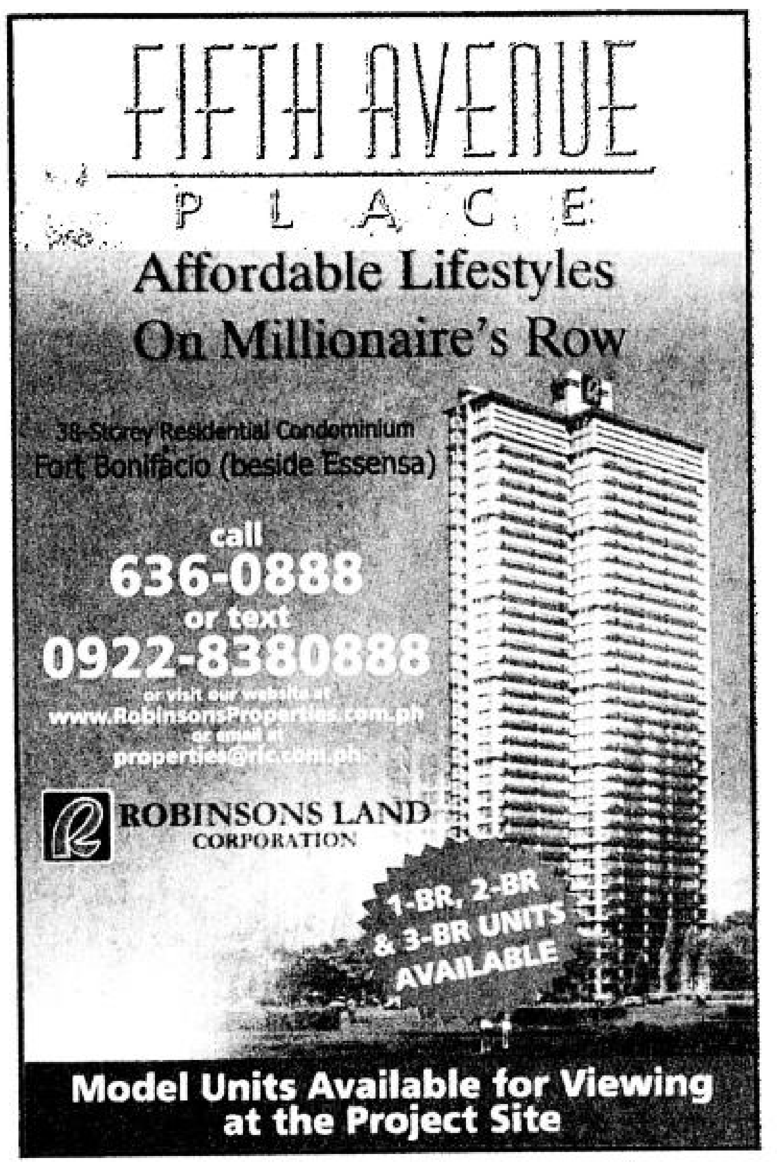
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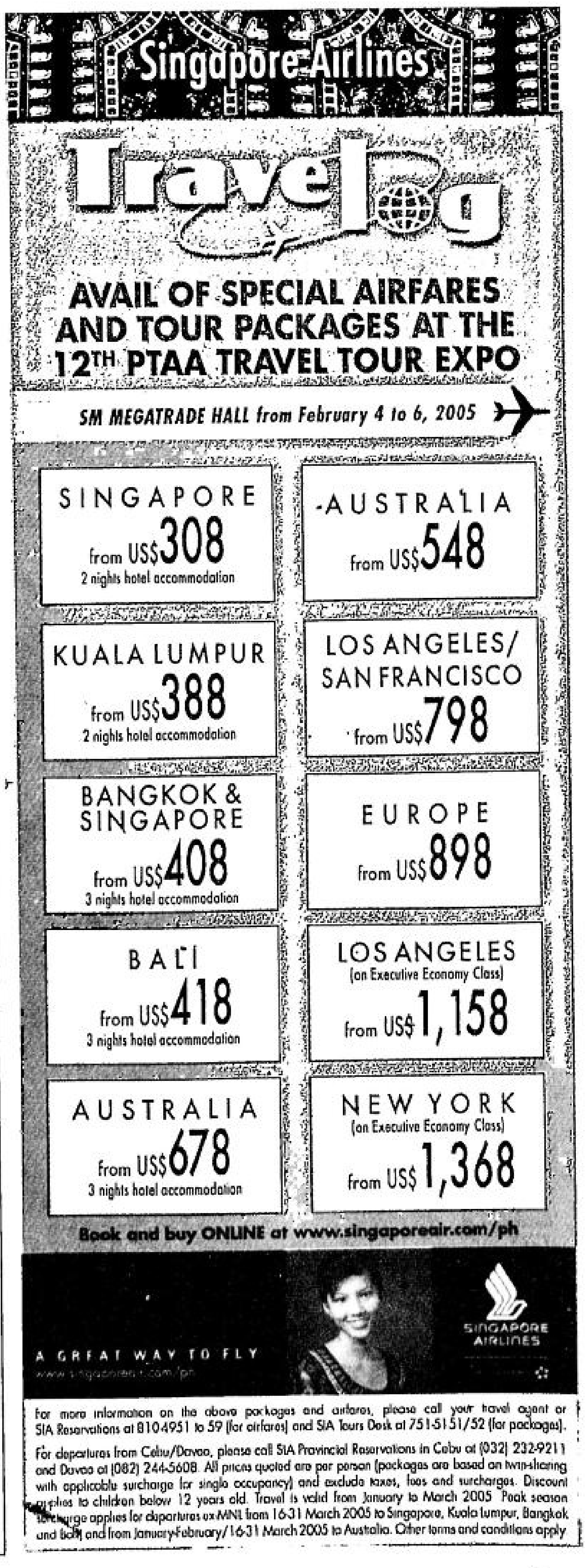
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Singtel can increase Globe stake–Ablaza

By Clarissa S. Batino

GLOBE Telecom Inc. said there was enough room for Singapore Telecom Ltd. to increase its stake in the joint venture with Ayala Corp. following talks that the regional player plans to expand its Philippine portfolio.

Globe president Gerardo Ablaza said there was room to adjust as SingTel's 45 percent ownership of Globe's common shares was only equivalent to voting rights of only 21.1 percent, below the cap of 40 percent.

Ablaza explained that the 40-percent limit on foreign ownership in sectors like telecom was determined by stock voting rights, which means that 60 percent of voting stock must be in Filipino hands.

Of Globe's total voting stocks, 69.1 percent remains Filipino even after SingTel bought 7 million common Globe shares held by Ayala Corp. in November, thus increasing its common shares to 45 percent.

At the same time, the sale reduced Ayala Corp.'s common Globe shares to 35 percent, equivalent to voting rights of 16.4 percent.

A joint venture company of Ayala Corp. and SingTel holds 53.1 percent of Globe's voting rights.

Asiacom Philippines Inc. is 60 percent owned by Ayala and 40 percent by SingTel.

"Asiacom holds preferred Globe shares. Because it is 60 percent owned by Ayala, Asiacom's voting rights is always counted as Filipino," said Ablaza.

SingTel's purchase of additional Globe shares in November affirmed the company's commitment to the country's second-largest phone company.

Ablaza, however, believed that SingTel has no immediate plans of increasing its stake in Globe.

Globe represents SingTel's biggest investment outside of Singapore.

Market talks have it that SingTel plans to widen its Philippine portfolio, either through Globe or through another local telecom company.

Ablaza is confident SingTel is not looking at another phone company.

"I am sure SingTel won't do that. As to upping its stake in Globe, it still can, but I think for now, it has no immediate plans," said Ablaza in an interview.

SingTel also owns Australia's second-ranked Optus and has substantial stakes in Thailand's Advanced Info Service Plc, India's Bharti Group and Indonesia's PT Telkomsel.

Globe posted profits of P8.9 billion in the first nine months where it saw its subscriber base grow to 11.7 million.

The company will announce its full 2004 results this week.

"I think that SingTel's purchase is also a reaffirmation of what they regard as Globe's strategic fit into their regional strategy. The sale does not affect Globe's strategy and operations or how it is managed," said Ablaza last November.

Globe and SingTel also formed in November a regional joint venture with five other players, some of which are subsidiaries of SingTel.

Bridge Mobile Pte Ltd., a Singapore-incorporated company, includes Singapore Telecoms, Bharti of India, Maxis of Malaysia, Optus of Australia, Taiwan Cellular Corp. and Telkomsel of Indonesia.

Bridge Mobile will be the commercial vehicle in which the seven operators vowed to jointly invest in to establish a regional mobile infrastructure and common service platform.

The alliance of the seven regional operators aimed to service some 56 million customers through a shared infrastructure that would initially cost $40 million.

Bridge Mobile has a combined base of more than 56 million, of which 11.7 million belongs to the local joint venture of Ayala Corp. and SingTel.

The customer base is expected to grow to 300 million over the medium term.

The joint venture is gearing for operations by the first quarter this year.

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New broom at Insurance Commission

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

BENJAMIN S. Santos, the new Insurance commissioner since last August, is sweeping the insurance industry with a stiff, new broom.

As required under the insurance code, eagle-eyed field auditors have spread out to examine the "affairs, financial conditions and method of business" of insurance companies. This examination is done at least once a year and whenever the commissioner "considers the public interest so demands." But this time, the commissioner is out for blood.

By law, if a company is in an unsound condition, the commissioner can suspend or revoke its license. The company is slapped with a "cease and desist" order, and stops doing business. The commissioner appoints a conservator, who is an absolute dictator. The conservator takes full charge of the company. He can overrule or revoke any previous acts by the management or the board of directors.

If the company is found to be insolvent, the commissioner names a receiver, who takes charge of the "assets and liabilities, as expeditiously as possible, collect and gather all assets and creditors."

If the company can no longer be saved, the commissioner can name a liquidator who takes over from the receiver. The liquidator reinsures all outstanding policies, converts the assets into cash. As far as the cash goes, liabilities are paid. The company disappears from the face of the earth.

Since Commissioner Santos took office, he has named conservators to take charge of three companies: Zenith, Mantruste and Development. Under previous commissioners, six other companies had been placed under conservators: First Integrated, First Quezon City, Luzon, Times, Wellington and Capital. Under receivership: Imperial. Under liquidation: TICO.

These companies were in a full-page ad on the INQUIRER last week. I hear the reason for the ad was that some of the companies were suspected of issuing policies on the sly.

If you have a policy, surety bond, or a claim against any of these companies, call up the Insurance Commission and ask for the name and address of the conservator, receiver or liquidator. You may be able to get some of your money back.

Is the non-life industry in trouble? Not so. There are about 90 non-life companies left. Most of them are absolutely reliable.

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These closures are not a result of the liberalization of the insurance industry. These 11 companies were part of the fringe market, what I call the sidewalk vendors of the non-life insurance industry. There are probably more than a few more of these companies lurking just beyond the horizon. I am sure Commissioner Santos will dig them out of their holes soon enough.

The closure of the three companies by Commissioner Santos is a wake-up call. But he is just warming up. Everybody is wondering when the next shoe will drop.

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PSALM to modify provisions in bid documents

By Abigail L. Ho

THE POWER Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. is set to modify some provisions in bid documents covering the privatization of the state-run National Power Corp.

"We'll put in some additional technical and financial requirements to further safeguard the interest of the government," PSALM vice president for asset valuation and disposal Froilan Tampinco told reporters.

He was quick to add, however, that it was not that the existing bidding provisions were too lax or did not provide enough safety nets for the government.

The reason for the whole exercise of putting in additional safeguards, he said, was to ensure that the government would always be at the winning end of every completed generation asset sale.

Some shortcomings in the existing rules, he said, would have to be corrected and improved.

He said some qualifying requirements would have to be put in place to ensure that the winner in any of the auctions for Napocor's gencos would have enough capability to operate the plant.

Also, he said certain provisions would have to be strengthened and improved to ensure that winning bidders would actually operate the plants when these are sold to them.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, Senate committee on energy chair Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Sen. Joker Arroyo were among those who questioned the sale of the Masinloc plant to virtual unknown YNN Pacific Consortium.

They all agreed that the firm had no financial or technical track record to speak of.

But PSALM president and incoming Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla justified the Masinloc sale to YNN by saying that even Republic Act No. 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira), clearly stated that financial muscle was the sole criterion for a bidder to be awarded a Napocor generation asset like Masinloc.

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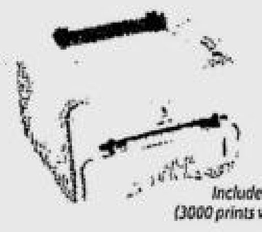

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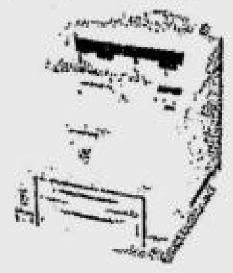

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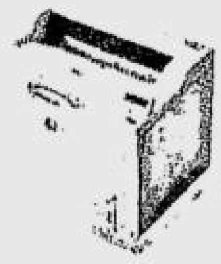

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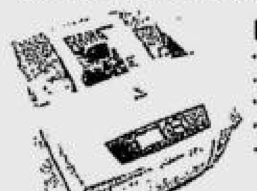

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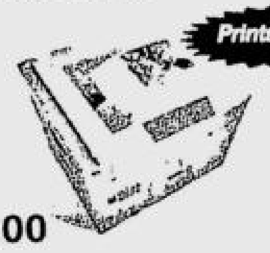

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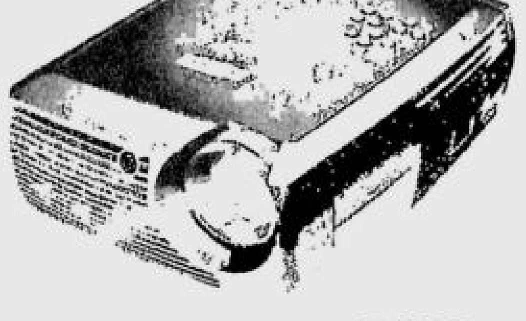

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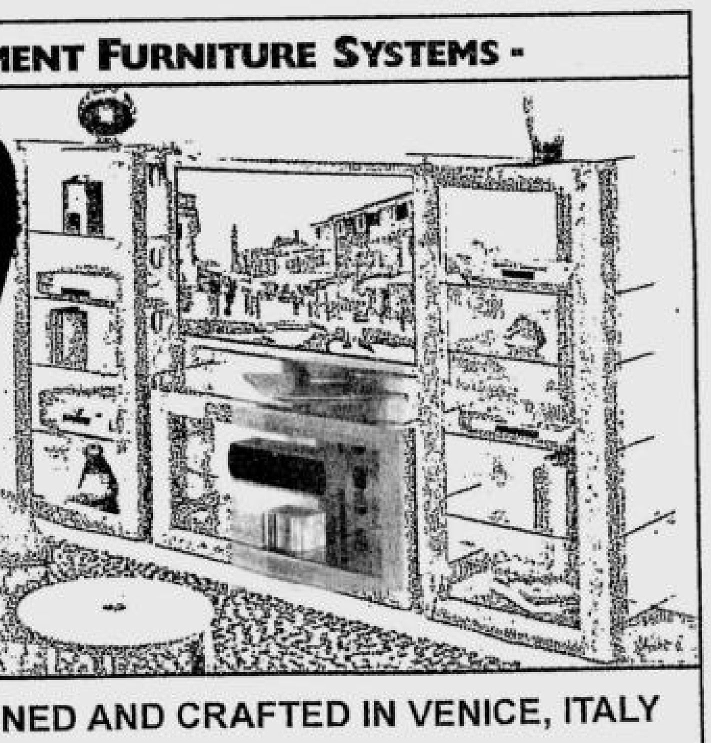

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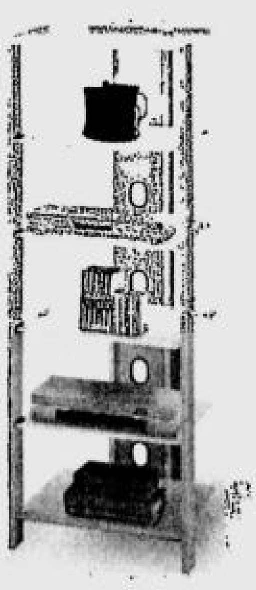

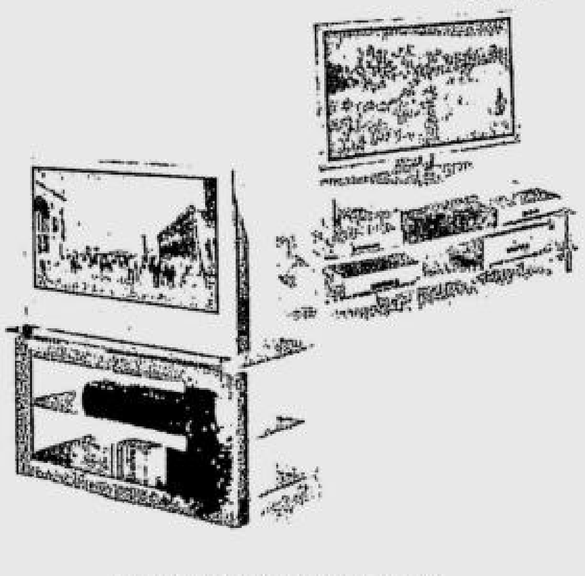

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Sights & Sounds.Shangri La Plaza: Tel. No 634-1789 to 90 • Soundroom Corp., Cebu City: Tel. No. (032) 231-0288

Peso on the rise

No Free Lunch

Cielito F Habito

THE PESO is on a roll. Easily the hottest news in economic and business circles these days is the way the peso-dollar exchange rate is poised to breach the 54:$1 level after having stayed well above 56 in recent months. As your basic law of supply and demand will tell you, the price of something (including of a currency, like the US dollar) will go down if either supply of it increases, or demand for it decreases, or both. So what is causing the peso value of the dollar to fall lately?

OFW remittances?

Let's look at the supply side. In the Philippines, a prominent component of our supply of dollars comes from remittances of income earned abroad by our OFWs. This has amounted to $7-8 billion per year in recent years. Has there been an unusual surge of these lately? Hard to tell—especially with at least a fourth of all OFW remittances still not recorded officially as they do not pass through the formal financial system—but it doesn't seem likely. In fact, third quarter 2004 figures indicate that there had been a dramatic slowdown in the growth of Net Factor Income from Abroad, which is a technicalese for earnings of Filipinos made abroad minus earnings of foreigners made in the Philippines. Over the first three quarters of 2003, this had grown by a hefty 24.2 percent; over the same period in 2004, this had grown by a mere 3.4 percent. While I don't have remittance data for recent weeks, I'd say the primary answer for the peso surge can't be there.

Export growth

Another major source of dollars entering the country is exportation. On this, we are expected to achieve the targeted 10 percent growth rate for the full year 2004. The 19.5 percent export growth, in dollar terms, reported for November was the fastest export growth we've seen since July 2002, and was also the second consecutive month of double-digit growth. This has likely continued through December and January, as growing demand for our electronics exports still dominating the picture, accounting for two-thirds of our export earnings. Garment exports also grew a hefty 33 percent in November over the previous year, contributing to the export surge. Export growth must be instrumental to the declining peso-dollar exchange rate, then. But is it the dominant reason? Still not quite.

Hot money

One needs to turn to the most fickle among the sources of our dollar supply, the so-called hot money, to get warmer (pardon the pun) on the answer. These are short-term investments in easily bought-and-sold financial assets like stocks and government bonds, also known as portfolio investments. Dollars entering in this form can come in quickly, on the decision of a foreign fund manager looking for the best way to make their clients' money grow fastest. But they can just as quickly get out at the slightest bad news; that's why they're called hot money. Contrast this to foreign direct investments (FDI), which are longer-term inflows that get tied up in factories, equipment and other productive inputs to set up or expand production operations locally. BSP data tell us this had actually dropped last year.

My friend and Los Baños town mate Astro Del Castillo, acknowledged whiz kid in the stock markets, attests that the local stock market has really been attracting a lot of foreign money lately. Whereas the amount of money changing hands in the stock market averaged only P500 million a day in 2004, these days we're seeing more than twice that amount, or more than P1 billion, he says. And the bulk of it is foreign money, gobbling up shares especially in our telecom companies, which everybody knows are raking in billions of pesos these days (P24B in 2004 profits for PLDT alone—thanks to our unstoppable "texting" habit, of course). Foreigners are also unloading their dollars in favor of other easy peso investments like government bonds and treasury bills. So the supply of dollars available to Filipinos is surging.

Weak dollar

But wait a minute. Weren't we "doomsayers" just saying a few weeks ago that the Philippine economy was headed for perdition, especially if we don't come up with lasting solutions to the government's fiscal difficulties? Now that the economy is supposedly "on a roll" (yahoo!), are we to be dismissed as a mere bunch of gripers and hecklers, then?

A major underlying factor to these trends is actually the weakening dollar, which I wrote about several weeks ago ("Dumping dollars," NFL, 11-22-04). I explained then why the Chinese and most everybody else outside the US are turning away from holding US dollars or dollar assets. The result? There's a lot of money out there looking for a place to go other than the US. My friend and Metrobank treasury chief Edmund Go, who has to study the markets closely, tells me we are among those actually just getting the leftovers, as we are near the "tail-end" of the line of fund managers' choices. And if the peso has moved up faster than our neighbors' currencies lately, that's because it is simply catching up. Remember that when the dollar started to weaken in October, our neighbors' currencies already strengthened, while ours still moved the other way.

So is the rising peso more the result of a "pull" towards the peso, or of a "push" away from the dollar? It's both, but I'm afraid it smells to me like it's more of the latter. To be fair, there have indeed been some good news lately that can exert some "pull." The government can still do so much to improve further on that, though. Now is not the time to gloat, nor be complacent. The economy is not on a roll; it's just the peso and the stock markets that are. As my Harvard professor used to say: The stock market, boys and girls, is not the economy.

So where is the peso headed this year? On this, I'll have to invite you to Ateneo's next "Eagle Watch" Economic and Political Briefing, to be held on Wednesday, Feb. 9.

For details on Eagle Watch, please call Lea Neri at 426-5661 or e-mail me at chabito@ateneo.edu

EPCIB's $150-M bond issue OKd

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE MONETARY Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas gave Equitable PCI Bank, the country's third biggest bank, the go-ahead to raise up to $150 million from a fresh global bond offering.

A source said the new foreign borrowing was approved by the BSP's policy-making body in its meeting last Thursday. The proceeds from the offering of new debt notes will be used for "liquidity management," the source added.

Equitable PCI earlier denied an INQUIRER report saying it was raising $150 million in fresh capital through subordinated debt or tier 2 offering.

A source from the Monetary Board said the bank was indeed tapping the offshore bond market but it would not be a tier 2 issuance.

Underwriters HSBC Ltd. and JP Morgan Chase are expected to launch the new offering in the next few days, which could thus make Equitable PCI Bank the first Philippine company to brave the international capital market following a sovereign credit rating downgrade by Standard & Poor's.

Banking sources said the new notes would likely carry a three-year maturity.

In 2003, Equitable PCIbank was the first bank to take advantage of the new rules drawn up by the BSP on the issuance of subordinated debt eligible as tier 2 capital and after the sovereign ratings downgrade for the Philippines. It raised a total of $200 million worth of 9.375 percent subordinated notes falling due in 2013, redeemable with step-up rates in 2008. UBS then acted as lead manager and sole bookrunner.

The bank, controlled by the Go family, was the target of a takeover attempt by mall magnate Henry Sy which owns Banco de Oro Universal Bank. It is also wrestling with the state-owned Land Bank of the Philippines for the number three slot among the country's biggest banks.

Market seen taking breather

THE STOCK market is expected to take a breather after its bull run the past weeks with prices almost reaching high levels, analysts said.

"The market is extremely overbought as share prices have risen too fast, too steep and too soon. Any rally that is more than a 45-degree climb is not expected to be sustainable. A healthy correction to allow other investors to buy in is needed to sustain the market's bullish trend. Short-term traders should be cautious to avoid overpaying for stocks," Jose Vistan of AB Capital wrote in a weekly report.

Market Play

The benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange composite index almost touched a new high after reports that the government sold $1.5 billion in bonds to investors, way above its original $1-billion goal.

The bond sale came a week after international credit ratings agency Standard & Poor's lowered the country's foreign currency rating one notch to BB- minus, citing the lack of urgency on the part of the government in tackling potentially painful fiscal reforms.

Analysts said market sentiment was also lifted by the passage by Congress of additional tax reforms such as the value added tax (VAT) rate hike to 12 percent.

Last week, the Phisix grew 27 points or 1.35 percent to close at 2,014.61, powered by gains from banks, property and utility firms.

BPI Trade, in a weekly report noted that banking stocks led the rally such as Philippine National Bank (up P4.25), Bank of the Philippine Islands (up P3) and Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. (up P1.50).

Lending support to the market were property stocks such as Ayala Land Inc., Megaworld Corp. and Filinvest Land Inc., as well as utility firms such as Manila Electric Co., Benpres Holdings Corp., First Philippine Holdings and Petron Corp.

Gainers for the week also included DMCI Holdings, International Container Terminal Services and JG Summit Holdings.

DMCI Holdings Inc. recently raised roughly P2 billion from international and local offerings of its shares in coal producer Semirara Mining Corp. early last week.

On developments overseas, the market is expected to watch the US Federal Open Market Committee meeting on Feb. 2 where investors expect a 25-basis point rate hike.

"If the (Fed) rates are maintained or if the extent of the rate increase is less than what the markets expect, Wall Street's possible rally could spill to Asian markets, upholding views for measures that aid economic recovery," 2TradeAsia.com said in a weekly report.

Despite the short-term challenges, analysts remain bullish about the stock market's prospects in the medium term since initial public offerings are once more lining up.

Further, new tax measures are also expected to help trim the country's fiscal deficit and reduce borrowings. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

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Alabang Country Club A/B*	1,150,000/1,200,000*	
Alta Vista A/B*	-	220,000*
Baguio Country Club	Pls Call	-
Calatagan Golf	60,000	-
Camp John Hay	Pls Call	-
Canyon Woods	160,000	100,000
Capitol Hills	120,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,650,000	1,300,000
Celebrity Sports	130,000	-
City Sports Club Cebu		Pls. Call
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	225,000/300,000*/Pls. Call**	-
Eastridge B	120,000	-
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	130,000/220,000**	160,000*
Luisita Golf		250,000
Manila Golf Corporate	Pls Call	11,000,000
Manila Golf Individual	Pls Call	-
Manila Polo	2,250,000	-
Manila Southwoods A/B*	400,000/Pls Call*	350,000/640,000*
Makati Sports Club	Pls Call	185,000
Metropolitan Club A/B*	180,000/200,000*	110,000
Mimosa C2/C3*	220,000	200,000*
Mimosa Golf Ind.		130,000
Mt. Malarayat A/B*	190,000	150,000/300,000*
Orchard A/B*/C**	200,000/260,000*/250,000**	-
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	120,000/150,000*/200,000**	-
Rockwell Leisure Club	280,000	-
Royale Tagaytay CC	80,000	-
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/110,000*/100,000**	-
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	1,400,000	1,500,000*
The Palms Country Club	520,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	340,000
Tagaytay Midlands	700,000	650,000
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Valle Verde Ind.	120,000	-
Valley Golf	Pls Call	-
Wack Wack Golf	Pls Call	6,500,000

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CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,000,000	1,150,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	1,200,000
Baguio Country Club		700,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"		50,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	70,000
Camp John Hay	170,000	200,000
Canlubang	450,000	550,000
Canyon Woods	-	150,000
Capitol Hills	100,000	120,000
Cebu Country Club	1,500,000	1,900,000
Celebrity Sports Club	-	130,000
Club Filipino	100,000	170,000
Eagleridge "A"	-	250,000
Eagleridge "B"		350,000
Eagleridge "C"		350,000
Forest Hills "A"	-	130,000
Forest Hills "B"		190,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	220,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	180,000	240,000
Makati Sports Club "B"		240,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	Please Call	-
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,500,000	-
Manila Polo	2,100,000	2,250,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	300,000	400,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	650,000	700,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	350,000
Metroclub "B"	-	120,000
Mimosa (Individual)	140,000	180,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	275,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	-	250,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	-	300,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	180,000	220,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	350,000	450,000
Quezon City Sports Club	140,000	180,000
Rockwell	230,000	300,000
Spa & Lodge	500,000	650,000
Sta Elena "A"	1,200,000	1,400,000
Sta Elena "B"	1,450,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	170,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	350,000	400,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	800,000
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000	700,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	120,000
Valle Verde (Corporate)	-	200,000
Valley Golf	200,000	230,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,400,000	6,600,000

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CLUB	SELLING	BUYING
Alta Vista "B"		250K
Baguio Country Club	500K	please call
Camp John Hay		170K
Canlubang Golf Club		450K
Canyon Woods	125K	
Capitol Hills "A"	100K	please call
Celebrity Sports Club	120K	-
Club Filipino	150K	
Club Punta Fuego	450K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "A"	200K	150K
Eagleridge Golf Club "B"	200K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "C"	280K	
Hacienda Luisita "B"	please call	please call
Makati Sports Club	200K	
Manila Golf Club Indiv.		1M
Manila Polo Club	2.2M	2M
Manila Southwoods "B"		670K
Manila Yacht Club	200K	-
Mimosa C3	500K	
Orchard Golf Club "A"	190K	
Orchard Golf Club "B"		280K
Quezon City Sports Club	145K	
Riviera Golf Club "A"	70K	please call
Riviera Golf Club "B"		140K
Rockwell Leisure Club	280K	
Spa & Lodge		500K
Sta. Elena Golf Club "A"	please call	
Sta. Elena Golf Club "B"		1.5M
The Country Club at TH	430K	370K
Tagaytay Highlands		760K
Tagaytay Midlands	please call	650K
The Palms Country Club	550K	
Valley Golf Club		230K
Wack Wack Golf Club	6.0M	please call

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 28, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.5	5.2	4.5	5	231,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	30	31.5	29.5	31.5	2,050,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	57	58.5	56.5	58	906,200
China Banking Corp.	570	570	570	570	1,240
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	46.5	46.5	45	45	234,100
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.46	0.47	0.46	0.46	3,870,000
International Exch. Bank	18.25	18.75	18.25	18.75	448,400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30.5	31.5	30	31.5	2,084,000
Prudential Bank	350	350	350	350	280
Philippine National Bank	27.5	28.5	27.5	28.5	120,700
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14.5	15	14.5	15	10,000
Security Bank Corp.	30	31	30	30.5	184,100
Union Bank Of the Phil.	28	29.5	28	29.5	107,400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1	1	1	1	100,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2350	2350	2350	2350	30
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2	2	2	2	589,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	130	130	130	130	5,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1765	1765	1765	1765	630
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	18.25	18.5	18.25	18.25	46,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.84	1.86	1.78	1.78	16,288,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	950	950	930	935	36,420
Ipeople Inc.	4.5	4.9	4.5	4.8	1,037,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.049	0.05	0.049	0.05	5,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.037	0.037	0.036	0.037	4,400,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	10,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.28	2.28	2.28	2.28	50,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	4	4.1	4	4	18,744,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1445	1455	1430	1430	158,630
Ivantage Corp.	0.66	0.7	0.66	0.7	2,650,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	114,100,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	17	17.5	17	17.25	120,600
Manila Electric Co. B	25.5	27.5	25.5	27.5	1,497,500
Petron Corp.	3.85	4.1	3.85	4.1	6,834,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.66	1.82	1.6	1.8	19,263,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.68	1.78	1.68	1.7	2,864,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.4	7.4	7.3	7.3	1,088,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	190,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	5,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.45	0.47	0.45	0.47	2,590,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	110,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.2	4.45	4.2	4.35	15,963,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	4	4.5	4	4.5	2,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.34	1.48	1.34	1.48	107,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	130,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.15	3.2	55,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30.5	30	30.5	207,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	27.5	27.5	27	27	546,500
RFM Corp.	0.74	0.82	0.74	0.82	270,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	290,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	58	87,000
San Miguel Corp. B	77.5	77.5	77.5	77.5	6,800
Universal Robina Corp.	9.8	10	9.8	9.9	267,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	1,600,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	14	14	13.25	13.25	9,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.009	0.008	0.009	323,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0085	0.0095	0.0085	0.0095	24,000,000
Ayala Corp.	7.8	7.9	7.6	7.7	14,874,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.57	0.76	0.57	0.74	3,850,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.9	2,040,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	500
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.03	0.032	0.03	0.032	44,400,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.92	1.94	1.9	1.92	288,000
APC Group Inc.	0.23	0.3	0.23	0.3	21,580,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0095	0.01	0.0095	0.0095	889,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.45	0.47	0.45	0.47	70,000
Aries Prime Res. Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.16	1.16	6,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.24	1.3	1.24	1.3	45,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	21.5	21.75	21.25	21.75	60,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.16	0.13	0.15	1,970,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.04	1.14	1.04	1.08	93,140,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	250,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.25	0.27	0.24	0.26	9,850,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.24	0.28	0.24	0.25	6,610,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.36	0.47	0.36	0.45	52,680,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	5.5	5.7	5.3	5.5	16,820,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.039	0.039	0.037	0.037	19,100,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.16	1.16	304,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8.9	9.1	8.9	9.1	2,025,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	37.5	39	37.5	39	3,132,400
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.21	750,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.0825	0.0725	0.0825	22,500,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.48	1.54	1.4	1.46	9,625,000
Ionics Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.58	1.58	220,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.3	848,000
Keppel Holdings	0.98	1.02	0.98	1.02	50,000
Keppel Holdings B	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	20,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.5	2.65	2.48	2.5	3,238,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	500,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.38	1.44	1.38	1.42	9,187,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	100,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	20,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.49	0.51	0.49	0.51	61,950,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	10,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.17	0.2	0.17	0.2	650,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.2	1.26	1.2	1.26	341,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.16	0.165	0.15	0.15	870,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	400,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.58	0.62	0.58	0.62	200,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	20,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.155	0.16	0.15	0.16	3,150,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.17	0.17	2,130,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	1,360,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.85	2.9	2.85	2.9	17,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.66	1.76	1.66	1.68	146,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	20,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.07	0.0775	0.07	0.075	16,800,000
Pryce Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.65	0.69	0.64	0.67	17,750,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	1.1	1.12	1.08	1.1	2,990,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.58	0.58	480,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	65,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.33	0.36	0.33	0.36	5,520,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	18	18.25	18	18	395,600
ATS Corp. - Preferred	3	3	3	3	2,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.6	9.1	8.6	9.1	12,047,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	30,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	20,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.32	8,120,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.145	0.15	0.145	0.15	1,500,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	340,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.4	0.43	0.4	0.41	38,160,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.36	1.44	1.36	1.42	12,328,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	20,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.205	0.215	0.2	0.21	4,360,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.67	0.71	0.67	0.7	2,460,000
MRC Allied Ind Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	500,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.6	118,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.215	0.225	0.215	0.22	1,670,000
SM Development Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.42	1.42	823,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.4	8.6	8.4	8.6	8,690,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.8	0.95	0.8	0.95	910,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.8	1.06	0.8	1.06	740,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.015	229,900,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	8.1	8.2	7.8	7.9	1,394,000
Benguet Corp. A	7.7	10.5	7.5	10.25	84,000
Benguet Corp. B	9	9	9	9	1,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3.5	3.9	3.5	3.85	110,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.47	0.47	0.46	0.46	32,810,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.54	0.55	0.52	0.52	53,850,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.025	534,300,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.036	0.038	0.034	0.035	1,232,300,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	237,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.42	1.42	1.34	1.34	12,017,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.78	1.8	1.66	1.68	20,361,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.41	0.46	0.41	0.46	1,880,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	102,000,000
Interport Res.	0.006	0.0075	0.006	0.0065	111,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0065	0.0075	0.0065	0.0075	69,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	513,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0095	0.0095	0.009	0.009	232,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.5	0.53	0.49	0.5	1,580,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.52	0.54	0.5	0.54	980,000
Pacifica	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.013	13,900,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.15	3.3	3.15	3.25	328,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.085	0.12	0.085	0.12	68,300,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.41	0.44	0.41	0.43	850,000

CURRENCIES

January 30, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.766930	1.000000	55.1880
Japan	Yen	0.007438	0.009698	0.5352
United Kingdom	Pound	1.447887	1.887900	104.1894
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.098343	0.128230	7.0768
Switzerland	Franc	0.647363	0.844096	46.5840
Canada	Dollar	0.619692	0.808016	44.5928
Singapore	Dollar	0.469904	0.612708	33.8141
Australia	Dollar	0.594612	0.775314	42.7880
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.034405	2.652661	146.3951
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.204510	0.266660	14.7164
Brunei	Dollar	0.468468	0.610836	33.7108
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000109	0.0060
Thailand	Baht	0.019937	0.025996	1.4347
UAE	Dirham	0.208836	0.272301	15.0277
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.303900	71.9596
Argentina	Peso	0.262423	0.342173	18.8838
Brazil	Real	0.287994	0.375516	20.7240
Denmark	Kroner	0.134370	0.175205	9.6692
India	Rupee	0.017570	0.022910	1.2644
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.201851	0.263193	14.5251
Mexico	New Peso	0.067957	0.088609	4.8902
New Zealand	Dollar	0.548669	0.715410	39.4820
Norway	Kroner	0.121175	0.158000	8.7197
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012994	0.016943	0.9351
South Africa	Rand	0.129330	0.168634	9.3066
Korea	Won	0.000746	0.000973	0.0537
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024026	0.031328	1.7289

Chicken exports seen hitting 14M kg in '05

By Christine A. Gaylican

EXPORTS of chicken are expected to increase this year to about 14 million kilograms, from only 1.56 million kg in 2004.

Sources said demand for Philippine chicken was expected to substantially rise as the country remained free of Avian flu or bird flu.

At the same time, shipments of day-old chicks to various Asian countries afflicted with Avian flu are seen to hit 3 million kg this year from only 300,000 kg last year.

"The Philippines has been a reliable source of day-old chicks for countries that need to replenish stocks that were affected by the virus." Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) director Jose Molina said in a news briefing Friday.

The country's big poultry integrators, including San Miguel Foods Corp., RFM Swift Foods Corp., Tyson Agro Ventures Inc. and Universal Robina Corp. and Vitarich Corp., are also bullish about the prospects of chicken exports as they continue upgrading their facilities to cope with the anticipated huge demand this year.

"The volume of exports could easily double or triple this year and 5 million kg would already be a good target for the industry," said Rita Palabyab, president of the Philippine Association of Broiler Integrators (Pabi) and vice-president of San Miguel Foods Inc. poultry division.

Palabyab said the primary market remained Japan, which used to get its 100,000-metric ton annual requirement from Thailand, which was among those badly affected by the Avian flu virus.

"Right now, the industry is not really actively exploring other markets because the demand from Japan, alone, is greater than what we can serve at the moment," said Palabyab.

She noted though that the Philippines had also been getting inquiries from Kuwait, United Arab Emirates and Australia.

Agriculture attache to Japan Joseph Sison said the country's chicken exports to Japan were expected to rise as Japanese trading houses were expanding their orders.

One of the major buyers is Marubeni Corp. which initially placed an order of 36,000 metric tons last year. The Philippine suppliers include San Miguel Foods Inc., Swift Food Inc. and Tyson-Agro Ventures.

Earlier, Molina said the country's major poultry producers were eyeing the expansion of their exports of dressed chicken and other poultry products to include new markets such as Hong Kong and South Korea. He said several companies were now in the process of acquiring the necessary accreditations that would facilitate their exports.

Ayala unit, 3 US firms tapped for alien ID project

NERI

THREE leading United States-based firms and one of the Philippines' top telecommunication companies are providing the Bureau of Immigration (BI) with state-of-the-art technologies in line with the agency's modern alien registration system.

The Ayala Group's Innove, Gemplus of Virginia, Identix of Minnesota and California-based Hewlett-Packard are supplying the various technical requirements of the Alien Certificate of Registration Identification Card (ACR I-Card) project. The project aims to automate the documentation of foreigners on extended stay in the country.

Earlier, Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said the project was expected to generate some P1.5 billion for the government over the next 10 years.

Neri lauded Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez for the project, saying "it is one of the country's biggest contribution to the global war against terror groups."

Expatriate communities in the country have also cited the project, noting that the high technology-based documentation system "would rid the country of illegal aliens and curb the harassment of those on legal stay."

According to Immigration Deputy Commissioner Arthel Caronoñgan, Gemplus is supplying the smart card component of the project. The card contains the microchip which integrates all the documentation requirements for a legal alien.

Gemplus, Caronoñgan said, was tapped by Singapore for its Immigration Automated Clearance System which sped up the country's identification and processing of trans-border workers and frequent visitors. Gemplus, which has sold over four billion smart cards in 37 countries, is the world leader in this market, he added.

Identix is supplying the biometric technology for the project, added. The firm was tapped by the US Department of Homeland Security for the live scan systems it set in place in all US port of entries after the 9/11 incidents. BI is using the Identix system for the secure authentication system of the ACR I-Card.

Hewlett-Packard, for its part, is supplying the computing and information technology requirements of the BI project.

Caronoñgan said the Ayala group was also involved in the project through Innove, the wireline and data service company of Globe Telecom.

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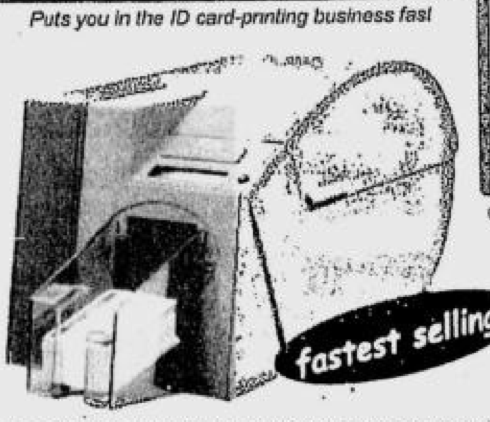

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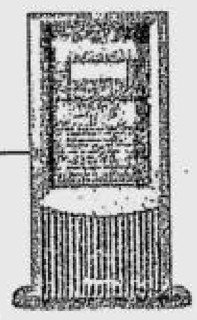

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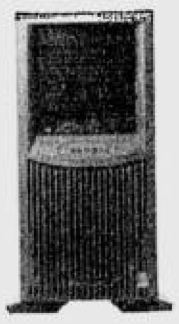

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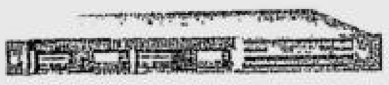

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- Integrated Lights Out Standard remote management tool
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GMA lauds Acces 2005

THE ASIAN Computer and Consumer Electronics Shows (Acces), the first-ever high-end international exhibit focusing on Information Technology and Consumer Electronics in the Philippines, will be held from April 6 to 9 at the World Trade Center Metro Manila.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has said that Acces is another positive sign that we are on the right path in the country's effort to rebuild the economy. Arroyo also said that showcasing the latest innovations in consumer electronics bid well for the country's quest for a vantage position as a major player in information technology. She added that it would create employment and livelihood opportunities for Filipinos by promoting the growth of industries.

Vice President Noli de Castro said the trade show, which focuses on IT and consumer electronics, is welcome for it is an effective venue for technology transfer. De Castro hopes that this event provides far-reaching opportunities to participants and guests to acquire new knowledge, to improve existing industries, and establish new business ventures.

The Department of Trade and Industry has commended LNA Management Group in its commitment in advancing the interest of IT and electronics industry. Former DTI Secretary Cesar Purisima said that Acces gives the Philippines an opportunity to discover, explore, and take advantage of the innumerable possibilities that the information technology and electronics sectors have to offer to both the consumer and industrial markets. Acces also provides a venue for major players in the telecommunications and electronics sector to convene and network with each other in tapping lucrative opportunities in the local and foreign markets.

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry confirmed that IT and consumer electronics sectors are now two of the fastest rising industries in the country today. "They are considered two of the significant contributing factors that the Philippines can focus on in order that we can surge ahead of our neighboring countries," said Noemi Saludo, PCCI president.

Meanwhile, Raul Joseph Concepcion, chair of the Philippine Appliance Industry Association Inc, a firm believer in the Philippines ability to be an "economic force on the global stage, is proud of the great strides made in the country in the field of IT and electronics. He also believes that with determination, a strong sense of commitment and unity, this positive experience can be replicated all over the country. He also enjoined all concerned to use the event not only as an informational and selling medium but use it also as a means of inspiring not only fellow practitioners but the general public as well on what the Filipinos can achieve.

It is now supported by government and private associations very much involved in the industry: the Office of the President of the Republic of the Philippines; Office of the Vice President of the Republic of the Philippines; DTI; Department of Tourism; PCCI; Philippine Appliance Industry Association Inc; Philippine Association of Private Telecommunications Companies Inc; Philippine Computer Society, Information Technology Association of the Philippines, Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines, Federation of International Cable TV Association of the Philippines, and Integrated Telecommunications Suppliers Association of the Philippines.

MANILABANK INAUGURATES GENERAL SANTOS CITY BRANCH

Manilabank recently inaugurated its new branch office located at President Roxas corner Lapu-lapu Streets, General Santos City. Leading the ribbon cutting ceremony to formally inaugurate the branch are General Santos City Mayor Pedro Acharon Jr. and Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio assisted by officiating priest Fr. Brando Recaña, businessman Rodrigo Rivera Sr, Manilabank director Eric R. Tagle, General Santos City branch manager Porfirio L. Cubar and other sponsors.

Globe, Innove share blessings with 'Batang K'

THE CELEBRATION of the Yuletide season wouldn't be complete without sharing something to someone. This gesture naturally came out of Globe Telecom and Innove Communications employees as they hosted the "Batang K's-Colors of Hope" art exhibit at the Globe Telecom Plaza last December.

"Batang K" is the outreach arm program of Kapwa Ko, Mahal Ko (KKMK) Foundation. At present, "Batang K" supports 40 kids who are all cancer patients. Through their art exhibit, the children were able to tangibly express their gratitude to their benefactors who unselfishly shared their blessings with them. Through their art, the interconnection between the children and their environment exude a feeling of hope to survive. The kids' artwork were also exhibited at the Shangri-La mall recently and earned a positive response from the public.

The artworks were exhibited at the 3rd floor, Breakout Area of Globe Telecom Plaza in Mandaluyong. The ceremonial cutting of the ribbon was done by Cesar Maureal, head of the human resources group of Globe together with Orly Mercado, chair of KKMK Foundation. Colleagues and friends of the Globe and Innove community also graced the affair.

Almost all of the artworks displayed during the event were sold. Just like a grand exhibit, employees and friends who bought works from the artists posed for the camera for a keepsake. Cash donations were also welcomed. Other employees even paid through their G-Cash, which was also honored.

Truly, the project gave reason for the kids to see the sun rising tomorrow.

by the Batang K Outreach Program
Kapwa Ko, Mahal Ko Foundation
Globe Teleco
ecember 15,

BATANG K artists with former Sen. Orly Mercado (middle), Cesar Maureal and Pia Reyes of Globe Telecom

BATANG K artists and their works

First Life awards best photos

Jollibee
Good Housekeeping

FIRST Life concluded its annual photography contest with an award ceremony at the SM Megamall recognizing the best photos. On its second year, the "Life Values 1st" photography contest is a celebration of innately Filipino values with focus on love of family. With the conviction that planning for a better tomorrow is the most eloquent expression of love for the family, the contest aims to reflect the impact and inspiration of life insurance on how Filipinos selflessly take care of their dear ones.

The best 12 photos were on display for a week at SM Megamall, which also served as venue for the award ceremony. Hosted by TV personality Chiqui Roa-Puno, the program recognized the contestants who submitted the best 12 pictures. Grand prize winner Ferdinand Singh took home P15,000 in cash while the next top five frontrunners received P5,000 each, and they were Rizalee Ibarra Imao, Charlene Ng Libao, Tina Marie de Leon, Judith Carlos and Carlo Carlos.

First Life is a leading provider of proudly Filipino world-class life insurance products that cater to the changing needs of families.

Shown are First Life president and CEO Peter G. Coyiuto, CLU (middle, back row) with EVP and actuary Jaime M. Santiago, FSA, FASP (right, back row) and individual insurance marketing senior assistant vice president Agerico L. Melgar (left, back row) flanked by the winners of the annual 'Life Values 1st' photo contest with the support of Good Housekeeping Magazine and Jollibee. Also shown are program host Chiqui Roa-Puno (2nd from left), Good Housekeeping editor Becky Kho (3rd from right) and First Life mascot Bibo.

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ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting a bidding on March 01, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila, among all interested rice suppliers for the supply of maximum 400,000 MT, 5% MOLSO non-iron fortified long grain white rice, 15% and 25% brokens and 100,000 MT, 5% MOLSO iron fortified long grain white rice, minimum 25% brokens in 50 kilograms net capacity polypropylene bags with an appropriated budget of Php7.526B for non-iron fortified and Php1.882B for iron fortified rice, from corporate resources. Source countries shall be Thailand, Vietnam, China, Pakistan and/or U.S. Breakdown as follows:

VOLUME (MT) 5% MOLSO	COMMODITY SPECIFICATION
300,000 non-iron fortified (mandatory bid)	25% brokens
100,000 non-iron fortified (mandatory bid)	15% brokens
100,000 iron fortified (optional bid)	min. 25% brokens min. regular milled

Maximum quantity to be procured for the U.S. and/or Pakistan sources shall be 50,000 MT, 5% MOLSO.

All interested suppliers are required to submit quotations for all specifications and all modes of payment for the mandatory bids otherwise, bids will be considered non-responsive. Price shall be quoted in USD per MT, CFR, FO, one (1) safe port, one/two safe berth/s under the following payment terms:

a. Documents Against Payment (D/P), Mandatory bid
b. Documents Against Acceptance (D/A) with a tenor of one hundred eighty (180) days from B/L date, mandatory bid
c. Documents against Acceptance (D/A) or Deferred Payment with a tenor of:
  c.1 three hundred sixty (360) days from B/L date, optional bid
  c.2 seven hundred twenty (720) days from B/L date, optional bid.

Arrival Period	Percentage of Volume to be Offered
Not Later Than April 2005	At least 60%
Not Later Than May 2005	Balance

Government suppliers and private suppliers who have delivered to the NFA within the last two (2) years (2003/2004) and do not have a bad track record may be awarded the following:

SUPPLIER	IRON-FORTIFIED	NON-IRON FORTIFIED
government (with good track record)	max. 100,000 MT	max. 300,000 MT
private (with good track record)	max 25,000 MT	max. 25,000 MT
government/private (without track record)	max. 15,000 MT	max. 15,000 MT

However, suppliers and/or source companies with pending import-related accounts/ liability prior 2003 are considered to have bad track records and are not allowed to participate in the bid. Suppliers without any track record with NFA, may be awarded a maximum of 15,000 MT each for iron-fortified and non-iron fortified rice.

Minimum volume to be offered per supplier shall be 10,000 MT per specification. Vessels to be utilized should have a maximum load capacity of 15,000 MT.

All bidders are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 10% of the highest value of offered quantity in the form of cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

Winning bidders are required to submit a performance bond equivalent to 10% of the value of the awarded quantity within three (3) banking days after receipt of the notice of award in the form cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank. Bid bond can be converted to performance bond

List of Eligibility Requirements may be secured starting 31 January 2005 thru MR. TOMAS R. ESCAREZ, Assistant Department Manager and MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO, Division Chief III, Directorate for Marketing Operations, 5th Floor, NFA, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City with telephone numbers 712-1564; 742-4140; 743-8696; 711-7433; 740-1977; 712-1708; and 712-1572.

The terms of reference and bid documents will be available from January 31 to February 23, 2005 (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P7,500.00.

The pre-bidding conference will be held on February 15, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Submission of bids will be on March 01, 2005 between 8:00 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila. Opening of bids will start exactly at 10:00 a.m.

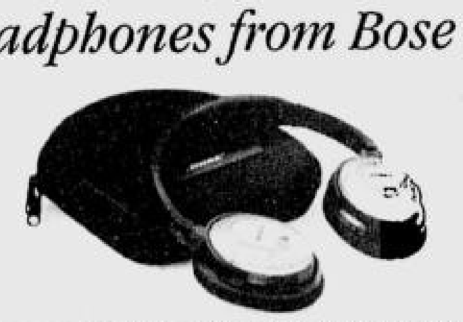
The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) JESSUP P. NAVARRO
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, BAC

(PDI – January 31, 2005)

ProductFiles

Acoustic headphones from Bose



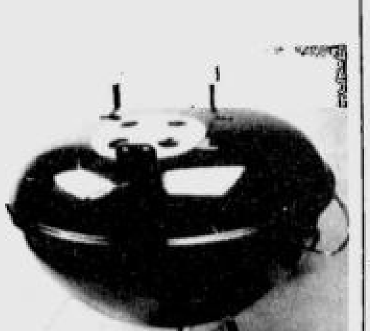
EXPERIENCE the innovative combination of noise reduction technology and headphone audio performance with the QuietComfort 2 Acoustic Noise Cancelling headphones. These premium headphones dramatically reduce unwanted noise.

QuietComfort 2's ergonomic design allows for a comfortable fit. The fold-flat feature makes storage of these lightweight headphones convenient. Slip on a pair of QuietComfort 2 headphones and hear the music come alive. Decades of Bose research combined with the Acoustic Noise Cancelling headphone technology delivers the ultimate in audio performance. This award-winning technology electronically identifies and reduces the unwanted noise around you. You may even forget you have them on.

Originally designed for air travel, QuietComfort headphones is an effective gadget whenever noise is a problem: on buses or trains, in the office, even at home. Bose engineers enhanced the convenience and portability features of the QuietComfort 2 headphones to make them even easier to enjoy in a variety of environments. Whether you take them on a trip or to the office, the QuietComfort 2 headphones will fold flat to store easily in a bag or briefcase. A single detachable audio cable gives you easy access to portable players, home stereos and in-flight entertainment systems, all with less tangling than two-cable designs. That same cable can be removed so your headphones can go "cordless" when you simply want the benefits of noise reduction.

Experience the QuietComfort 2 headphones for yourself. Call Eleksis Marketing at 724-9566/898-2048, or visit Bose showrooms at the R3 Level of the PowerPlant Mall, 3rd Level of the SM Megamall and the 3rd floor of Robinsons Place, Manila.

Weber Grills at True Value



A NAME that has always been synonymous with outdoor cooking, Weber has developed an ingenious, cutting-edge technology to good old grilling fun. Not all grills are created equal they say, and Weber is out to prove that its products are head and shoulders above others. Weber's extensive line of models boasts of three qualities: portability, sturdiness and easy-to-use design. Its gas models were designed to eliminate the two most common problems in grilling, that is, uncontrollable flare-ups and uneven heat. Its performer series charcoal models, on the other hand, ensure hassle-free cooking through the Touch-N-Go Ignition System that ignites and prepares the charcoal briquettes for use in 25 minutes. Other notable features of the latter include a hinged cooking grate that lets the user add charcoal briquettes while grilling, and a high-capacity ash catcher.

Outdoor cooking enthusiasts can get these Weber grills and accessories at True Value Home Centers: Shangri La Plaza, Park Square 1, Alabang Town Center, Power Plant Rockwell and Ayala Center, Cebu. A Weber grill is designed to weather the elements and stand the test of time, which make it a perfect gift to your spouse or family members. As an added treat, a 10-percent discount on grilling accessories and FireSpice Cooking Wood Chips will be given with a purchase of any Weber grill. So, if you're planning a backyard cookout, do it in style, Get a Weber grill now.

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Editor Leo Magno
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Philippine gaming: Boon or bane?

By Alex Villafania and Erwin Oliva
Contributors

FOR the first time, government has acknowledged that the emerging gaming industry in the Philippines would not only help boost the development of the country's digital infrastructure but also attract investors, generate jobs and enhance education through e-learning.

"To a certain degree, gaming will help us achieve our goal of developing the Philippine digital infrastructure," said Virgilio Peña, chairman of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology, the country's highest policy-making body on ICT matters.

Citing the experience of South Korea, Peña said gaming as digital content can increase the usage of broadband networks as well as accelerate nationwide broadband deployment. The development of the Philippine digital infrastructure is part of the 10-point agenda of the Macapagal administration.

"For South Korea, gaming is one of the killer applications that led to Internet growth. Now should it be the killer app for the Philippines?" Peña said rhetorically.

Peña delivered the keynote speech at the third annual forum of the Information Technology Journalist Association of the Philippines or Cyberpress. This year's Cyberpress forum focused on the gaming industry in general, the emerging business of gaming and its social and economic implications to Philippine society.

At the same forum, technology research firm International Data Corp. (IDC) said the online gaming market in the country has indeed lowered the cost of broadband Internet.

The local online gaming industry was a $2.8-million market in 2003, according to Manuel Ravago, research manager for IDC Philippines.

"This was from nearly zero in 2002," he added.

Ravago also said the compounded annual growth rate of the local online gaming subscription market from 2002 to 2007 is projected at 58.4 percent.

Surprisingly, IDC also revealed that the number of local online gamers would hit 6.3 million by 2008, steadily increasing as the number of Internet users increases to 21.5 million.

Ravago said the growth of the gaming industry is being driven by the availability of new online game titles and broadband connections. Lower costs of broadband access and personal computers will also encourage the growth of online gaming but will not necessarily be decisive factors. The social aspect of online gaming—communities of friends or families forming "clans" when playing online—has also helped drive this growth.

Raymond Ricafort, president of Digital Paradise Inc., owner and franchise holder of Internet café chain Netopia, said the Philippine gaming industry is growing by leaps and bounds with the entry of so-called massively multiplayer player online role-playing games (MMORPGs) such as Ragnarok. There are about 500,000 online gamers in the country who spend an average of two hours playing online games at Internet cafés, he said.

Unfortunately, Philippine government and local schools do not share the same enthusiasm of people and companies involved in the computer gaming industry.

"Computer gaming is not considered a formal industry in the country. It is viewed as an addictive and evil form of pastime," said Ricafort.

Ricafort urged government not to ignore the booming gaming industry in the Philippines. He insisted that "proper regulation" of this industry would not happen if government would continue treating it as an "evil form of entertainment."

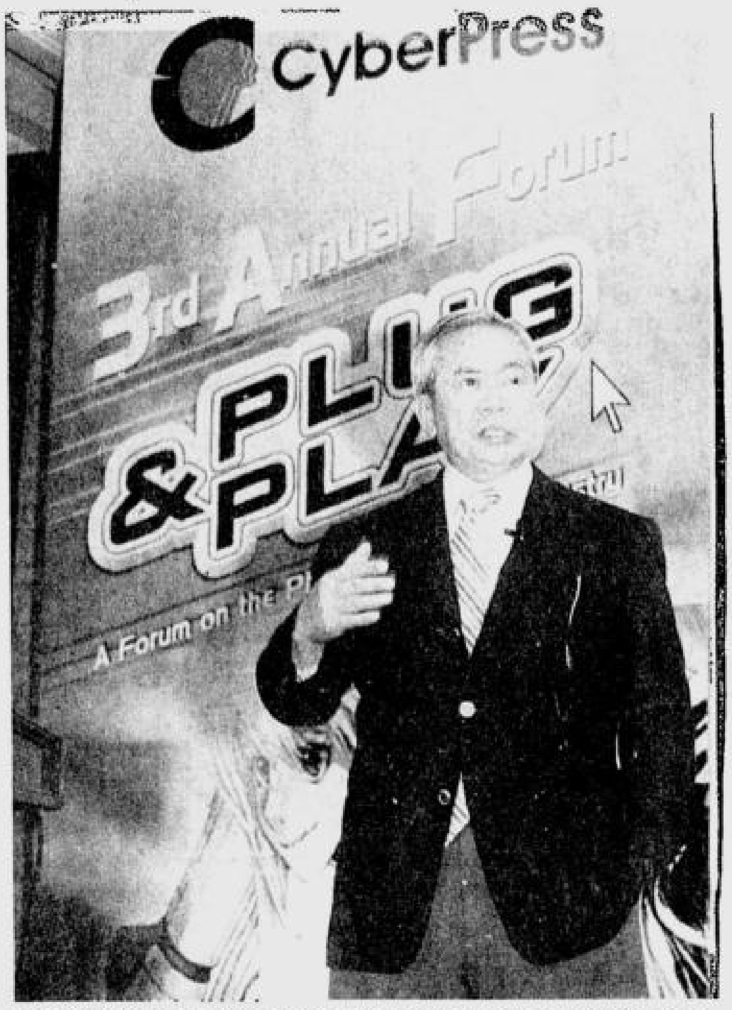
He asked government to begin creating the necessary guidelines for the regulation of the gaming industry.

"The average Filipino child is exposed to a personal computer less than an hour a week, and more than two hours a day in front of a television set. There is certainly more information on the Internet than in most television shows," Ricafort added.

Meanwhile, Peña admitted that there exists a thin line between computer gaming and gambling.

"We need to completely eliminate gambling in gaming because we want to build a wholesome environment," said Peña.

He also stressed the need to address the issue of "game abuse."



COMMISSION on Information and Communications Technology chairman Virgilio Peña acknowledged that the emerging gaming industry in the Philippines would help boost the development of the country's digital infrastructure.

STUDENTS check out the online game Tantra during the third annual forum of Cyberpress, the country's association of IT journalists. This year, the forum was about the gaming industry in the Philippines.

Some schools have blamed computer and online games for the deteriorating performance of students in school.

Ricafort, however, likened some schools' perception about gaming to his mother who once viewed billiards and boxing as a "Kanto-boy" sport.

"(Her views changed) when Efren Bata Reyes and Manny Pacquiao brought home the bacon," Ricafort added.

Local game publisher Level-Up! which runs the country's most popular MMORPG—Ragnarok—has acknowledged that it has been embattled by criticisms, as parents and schools blamed online games for the waning performance of their children in school.

Level-Up! has about 50,000 concurrent users playing its online game in the Philippines.

According to Level-Up! game boss Ben Colayco, the game publisher has recently introduced initiatives to encourage students and schools to use its online game as an incentive for kids to study harder.

"To parents whose kids have become addicted to our online game or have found their kids having problems in school because of Ragnarok, we can block them from playing the game until their grades are up," said Colayco. "Indeed, when parents tried to ban their kids from playing the game, they shaped up."

Tjader Regis, Philippine team leader of local gamers who compete in the World Cybergames, admitted that gaming has been viewed negatively in the country mainly because it is considered a pastime or a form of entertainment. The World Cybergames is one of the biggest video game tournaments, offering big prize money.

"I'm a game addict but I have never flunked a subject in school," Regis said.

Regis acknowledged that there is currently a "confused understanding" of computer games in government and the private sector—a generation gap or digital divide, as Colayco called it.

He also said that there have been hasty generalizations and prejudice, as well as stereotyping, of Filipino computer gamers in the country.

In other countries in Europe and in South Korea, computer gamers are revered. In South Korea, professional gamers are treated as celebrities, as they have been elevated to the level of cyber-athletes.

Regis cited successful computer gamer Jonathan "Fatal1ty" Wendel who earns $100,000 a year in prize money. Due to his winnings and popularity as a professional gamer, he now owns a computer hardware brand.

Meanwhile, Ricafort said that government should no longer ignore the gaming industry.

"Should we nurture it or ignore it? We need to convince government that gaming is a legitimate industry. Proper regulation will not happen if we don't treat it as such. Singapore now regulates gaming," he said.

Government, for its part, challenged the gaming industry to "transfer the entertainment value" of gaming to "knowledge creation," said Peña.

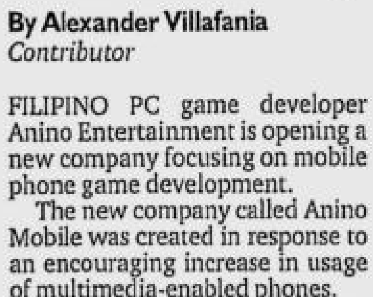
He said that the biggest debate about gaming in general is the issue of how it can make society better.

For now, Peña said that gaming can facilitate computer learning and the adeptness of children. It can also develop their strategic thinking and teamwork skills. Gaming is also one way of capturing the interest of the young who are now attracted to multimedia content, he said.

"We should use gaming to capture the interest of children toward education. Use gaming techniques to attract the young," he said.

The government official also pointed out that the Philippines could explore the possibility of making the country a regional hub for online gaming services, considering the emerging market for MMORPGs and other computer games that could be played online.

Peña added that perhaps in the long-term, the local gaming industry could strengthen government's campaign against piracy, a problem that continues to hound local game and software developers.



ANINO Entertainment became popular for its PC game called "Anito."

Anino spawns mobile startup

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

FILIPINO PC game developer Anino Entertainment is opening a new company focusing on mobile phone game development.

The new company called Anino Mobile was created in response to an encouraging increase in usage of multimedia-enabled phones.

Anino Entertainment Spokesperson Niel Dagondon said the new company has about 10 employees, nine of whom are the developers themselves.

The company has already lined up three games to be released within the year. The first is entitled "Black Ops," a turn-based action strategy game.

Dagondon said the new game can be played in Nokia Series 40 and 60 phones as well as Sony Ericsson 500 series models.

"Black Ops will be launched in April and we're hoping to tap the local market of MMS phone users," Dagondon said.

The other games are still under development.

According to Dagondon, the distribution of "Black Ops" will be done by downloading thru the mobile communications carriers. Each download could cost from P30 to P50, which is the typical cost of a downloaded game.

Dagondon said there are plans to export the new mobile games.

Filipino hacker in hiding

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

AN ALLEGED Filipino hacker involved in the attack of government portal "gov.ph" and other government websites has gone into hiding after a local court ordered his arrest last week, police told Infotech.

Judge Antonio Eugenio of the Manila Regional Trial Court ordered the arrest of JJ Maria Giner who was found to have violated section 33a of the Electronic Commerce Law.

The warrant of arrest, a copy of which of was obtained by Infotech, was issued on January 24, 2005. Police have not yet arrested the alleged hacker.

"He's gone into hiding," said Superintendent Gilbert Sosa of the Anti- Transnational Crime Division of the Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (PNP-CIDG).

Sosa, however, declined to give more details, adding that the PNP-CIDG has dispatched a team to arrest Giner.

The court has set bail at P25,000, a decision lamented by the high-ranking police official. In an earlier interview, Sosa questioned why Giner's offense was bailable even though he undermined national security.

"We hope he is still in Manila," he added, noting that the suspected hacker might have gone back to his hometown of Iloilo City.

The Department of Justice last month decided that there was enough evidence to file charges against the suspected hacker.

Undersecretary Abraham Puruganan, head of the Task Force for the Security of Critical Infrastructure (TFSCI), is the main complainant in the "gov.ph" hacking case, according to government prosecutor Geronimo Sy.

In a separate phone interview, Puruganan said the TFSCI might ask the Bureau of Immigration to issue a hold-departure order in case Giner decides to escape abroad.

Puruganan filed the case against the Filipino hacker in behalf of several government websites that were attacked from April to May 2004.

Giner is a former employee of the state-run University of the Philippines' Iloilo campus.

Government prosecutors say that the suspected Filipino hacker attempted to deface the official website of the Philippine government days before and after the May 10, 2004 elections. The "gov.ph," website is hosted by Dagupan-based Internet service provider Bitstop Inc.

The website of the Journal Group of Publications was also attacked, prosecutors said.

NTC to release revised VoIP guidelines

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission (NTC) is scheduled to release draft guidelines on the use of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) in the Philippines by March as it waits for additional input from local Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and telecommunication carriers.

NTC Commissioner Ronald Olivar Solis said the draft VoIP regulation would be subject to public consultations, as he admitted that the NTC was having a difficult time piecing together a VoIP implementation model in the Philippines, especially since telecommunications carriers and ISPs continue to debate whether VoIP should be considered as regular voice traffic or as a value-added telecommunications service.

The latter would allow non-telecommunications companies to offer commercial VoIP services; the former would restrict VoIP to telecommunications companies that enjoy a congressional franchise to carry voice calls.

Solis noted that the NTC took some ideas from VoIP implementation models in South Korea, Thailand and Singapore. Solis said some VoIP implementations did not work well in other countries.

"We want to make sure we don't replicate the bad examples in VoIP implementation," Solis said.

On the other hand, Solis could not say when the VoIP issue would be resolved.

"Not even the US has been able to properly deploy a VoIP infrastructure," Solis argued.

The NTC's announcement of the draft regulation parallels Congress' plans to revive a bill that would classify VoIP as a value-added service.

The bill, filed by Cebu Fourth District Representative Clavel Martinez, is scheduled for a public hearing in February.

Senator's proposal to clamp down on cybersex

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

REVILLA

SEN. Ramon Revilla Jr. has filed a bill to curb the use of computers and the Internet to distribute pornography.

He said in a statement that Senate Bill no 1892 seeks to "add more teeth" to Republic Act 9208, otherwise known as the "Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003."

Revilla filed the bill in reaction to recent sting operations against alleged cybersex shops, the most recent of which was in Barangay Talon in Las Piñas City.

Another raid was conducted in Intramuros, Manila where more than 1,000 copies of pornographic newspapers and magazines were seized.

Revilla was the former chairman of the Optical Media Board, which conducted raids against vendors and producers of illegitimate copies of movies, music and software.

The bill covers all digitally transmitted pornographic materials whether disseminated through websites, e-mail, optical media such as CDs, and even chat rooms.

Revilla emphasized that there are at present no clear laws punishing pornography transmitted through the Internet.

"At present, [the] proliferation of pornographic materials through traditional and new mediums [is] not clearly punishable. And if they are punishable, the penalties are [so] inconsequential that perpetrators are not deterred from pursuing their immoral and indecent activities."

Under the bill, Revilla proposed a penalty of 12 to 20 years imprisonment and a fine of at least P250,000 for anyone who publishes, broadcasts, exhibits, sells and acquires pornographic materials.

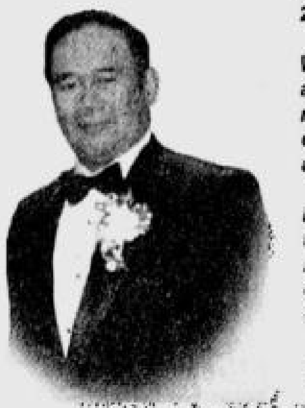
Soliciting sex through e-mail or Internet chat rooms is also punishable under the bill.

Cohorts of pornographers will also be sentenced to 12 years of imprisonment and charged a P100,000 fine.

In a similar action last week, the National Telecommunications Commission ordered cable TV operators to temporarily shut down TV-based chat rooms, alleged to have encouraged prostitution, until regulations are created to curb indecent activities.

THE MAKING OF MASTERS

PRU LIFE U.K. ANNUAL AWARDEES OF 2004



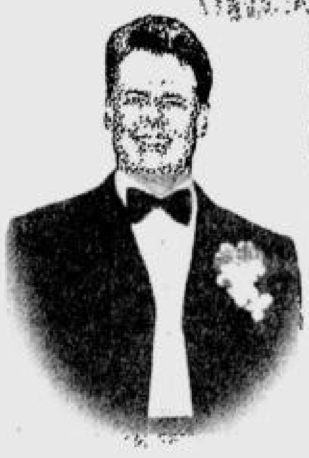
Congratulations to the PruLife Masters – the to
2004!

We had an amazing year that resulted in a bumper
and honor club awardees. I especially salute tho
registered new records and who continuously
colleagues and to the entire industry, that being
about excellence and growth.

Early last year we all pledged to be superheroes
to pursue our Company's goals for 2004. Mission
Let us march through 2005 with the same
commitment, as I and all your colleagues in hon
our pledge to support you in all your endeavors.

More power and God bless!

B
Pre



Congratulations Achievers, and Congratulations

I have had the opportunity to participate in
initiatives and to witness the quantum leaps you
during these last four years. You are definitely at
Prudential colleagues across Asia as we contin
growth and our brand gains universal recognition
in many cultures and societies.

Prudential continues to move on high gear and I
you to keep the momentum and be the best age
has ever seen. Behind you is a top-notch ma
and the most dynamic product portfolio, test
superior everywhere it is sold.

I look forward to another record-breaking year!

Prudential C

PRU LIFE U.K. BRANCH OF THE YEAR

CEBU BLUE PEARL

SPECIAL AWARDS

TOP PRODUCER AND AGENT OF THE YEAR

BERNADETTE TAD-Y
BLUE PEARL

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

JUDIN & DEAN WONG
BLUE PEARL

UNIT MANAGER OF THE YEAR

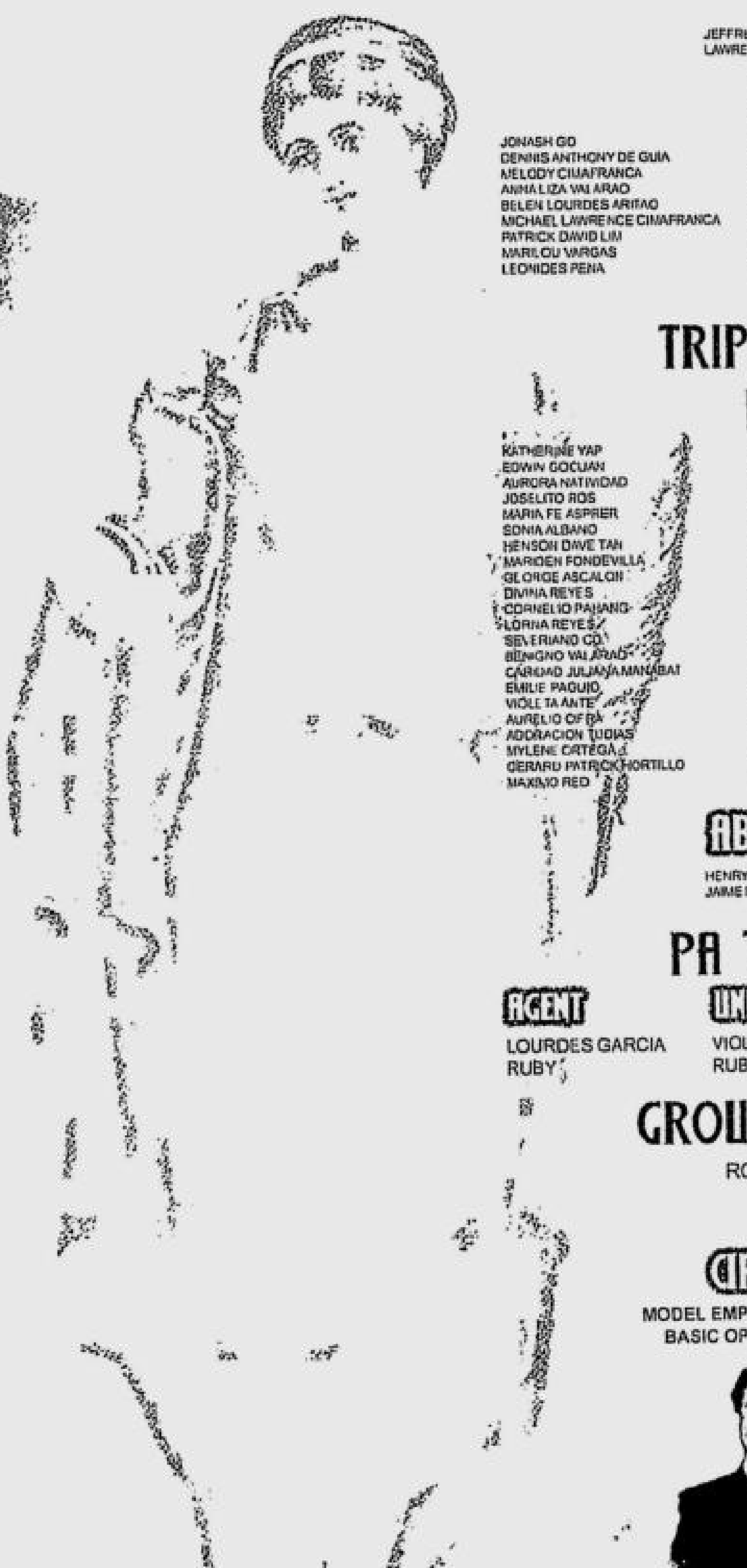
KAYE YAP
BLUE PEARL

BRANCH MANAGER OF THE YEAR

HENRY GOCUAN
BLUE PEARL

TOP PRODUCERS

Top L-R: MA. FIDES YAP *(Blue Pearl)*, SONIA ALBANO *(Diamond)*, GINA MARIE SAW *(Mica)*, JUDIN WONG *(Blue Pearl)*, DEAN WONG *(Blue Pearl)*, *Bottom L-R:* MA. FELISA JARQUE *(Blue Pearl)*, GWENDOLYN PARDO *(Blue Pearl)*, RAFAEL ASPRER, JR. *(Blue Pearl)*, KATHERINE YAP *(Blue Pearl)*, HENSON DAVE TAN *(China Jade)*



CASECOUNT LEADERS CLUB

CENTENNIAL CLUB

MA. FELISA JARQUE	BLUE PEARL
LEAH ALVARADO	CITRINE

SILVER CLUB

JEFFREY TAN	BLUE PEARL
LAWRENCE YU	BORROMEO

BRONZE CLUB

JONASH GO	CHINA JADE	LOURDES GARCIA
DENNIS ANTHONY DE GUIA	DIAMOND	LOURDES RAMOS
MELODY CIMAFRANCA	BLUE PEARL	HENSON DAVE TAN
ANNA LIZA VALARAO	PHOENIX	SHALINI ACUNA
BELEN LOURDES ARITAO	RUBY	MA. CARMEN AYPA
MICHAEL LAWRENCE CIMAFRANCA	BLUE PEARL	GINA MARIE SAW
PATRICK DAVID LIM	BORROMEO	MILAGROS ARANAS
MARILOU VARGAS	CARNELIAN	EDITH CHUA
LEONIDES PENA	TEKTITE	ROY RAGAZA

TRIPLE A AWARDEES

UM CATEGORY

KATHERINE YAP	BLUE PEARL	ESTRELLA GAMAO
EDWIN GOCUAN	BLUE PEARL	ELSA SAMBALILO
AURORA NATIVIDAD	STAR OF ASIA	EDWIN ALILANO
JOSELITO ROS	BLUE PEARL	JOSE JEFF DAMAYO
MARIA FE ASPRER	BLUE PEARL	FORTUNE ALFORQUE III
SONIA ALBANO	DIAMOND	GLORIA VALE
HENSON DAVE TAN	CHINA JADE	NILA DACANAY
MARIDEN FONDEVILLA	BORROMEO	CECILIA GOCHINGCO
GEORGE ASCALON	PYRITE	JULIETA ALONZO
DIVINA REYES	RUBY	WILMA ASPRER
CORNELIO PAHANG	BLUE PEARL	ANNA LILIA GUTIERREZ
LORNA REYES	DIAMOND	MYRNA SOLIMEN
SEVERIANO CO	MICA	DARWIN ANDREY
BENIGNO VALARAO	PHOENIX	WINSTONE PULIDO
CARIDAD JULIANA MANABAT	JASPER	MADORA-JOLIVETH AVINANTI
EMILIE PAQUIO	BALUYOT	GERALDINE SANTA ANA
VIOLETA ANTE	RUBY	GERTRUDES ELENA GABALE
AURELIO OFRA	JASPER	ALEJANDRO GUILLERME JR
ADORACION TUDIAS	TUDIAS	JAY MATTHEW MARIANO SR.
MYLENE ORTEGA	DIAMOND	JAMES EDWARD NICOLAS
GERARD PATRICK HORTILLO	RED ONYX	GERRY MOJICA
MAXIMO RED	NEON	

ABM/BM CATEGORY

HENRY GOCUAN	BLUE PEARL
JAIME BARBA	MICA

PA TOP PRODUCERS

AGENT

LOURDES GARCIA
RUBY

UNIT MANAGER

VIOLETA ANTE
RUBY

BRANCH M

HENRY GOCU
BLUEPEARL

GROUP TOP PRODUCER

ROGER OLAGUER BLUE TOPAZ

CIRCLE OF PRUDENCE

MODEL EMPLOYEES WHO EXEMPLIFY PRUDENTIAL'S BASIC OPERATING PRINCIPLES OF R.E.S.P.E.C.T

FRANCIS ALVEZ
SENIOR ANALYST - ISD
APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT

ELAINE KATINDOY
SENIOR MANAGER
AGENCY TRAINING

SPECIAL AWARDS RUNNERS-UP

AGENT LEVEL

RAFAEL ASPRER, JR.
BLUE PEARL

JUDIN & DEAN WONG
BLUE PEARL

ROOKIE LEVEL

MA. FELISA JARQUE
BLUE PEARL

THELMA SALVANA
BORROMEO

UNIT LEVEL

EDWIN GOCUAN
BLUE PEARL

MA. FE ASPRER
BLUE PEARL

BRANCH LEVEL

CHERYL LYNN MARTINEZ
DIAMOND

KRISTIN BORROMEO
BORROMEO

25th Floor, Tower 1, The Enterprise Center, 6766 Ayala Avenue corner Paseo de Roxas and Dela Rosa o achievers of

crop of MDRT's
se agents who
prove to their
PruLifer is all

with a mission
accomplished!
passion and
e office renew

obby G. Madrid
ident and CEO
Pru Life UK

PruLifer

many of your
nade, especially
tuned with your
e to experience
and acceptance

am counting on
ts this industry
agement team,
ed and proven

Kevin Holmgren
Senior Director
Insurance
orporation Asia

RUBY
DIAMOND
CHINA JADE
CHINA JADE
RUBY
MICA
CRYSTAL QUARTZ
BLUE PEARL
BLUE PEARL

TEKTITE
RUBY
ALAMBAY
BLUE PEARL
BLOODSTONE
STAR OF ASIA
CITRINE
CORAL
HESSONITE
ALAMBAY
JASPER
MAGNETITE
TEKTITE
BORROMEO
RUBY
CITRINE
STAR OF ASIA
RED ONYX
GOLD
JASPER
HESSONITE

IANAGER

AN

MILLION DOLLAR ROUND TABLE

Top L-R : HENSON TAN *(China Jade)*, ROY RAGAZA *(Blue Pearl)*, MARITES MODINA *(Blue Pearl)*, ARTEMIO WAPANIO *(Blue Pearl)*, SONIA ALBANO *(Diamond)* , MARIE JOCELYN CANG *(Blue Pearl)*, MA. LOURDES YAP *(Blue Pearl)*, GINA MARIE SAW *(Mica)*, ANTHONETTE MAHINAY *(Blue Pearl)*, JUDIN WONG *(Blue Pearl)*, DEAN WONG *(Blue Pearl)* *Bottom Row L-R* : JEFFREY TAN *(Blue Pearl)*, MA. FIDES YAP *(Blue Pearl)*, ELIZABETH TAN *(Mother of Pearl)*, RAFAEL ASPRER, JR. *(Blue Pearl)*, ENRICO MANUEVO *(Granite)*, BERNADETTE TAD-Y *(Blue Pearl)*, MARIDEN FONDEVILLA *(Borromeo)*, KATHERINE YAP *(Blue Pearl)*, GWENDOLYN PARDO *(Blue Pearl)*, PETER MICHAEL DELATORE *(Blue Pearl)*, *Not in photo: ANNA LIZA VALARAO (Phoenix)*

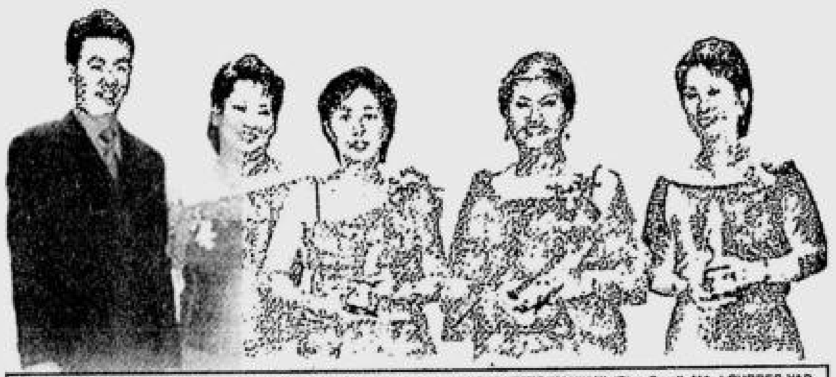
INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Top L-R: MA. LOURDES YAP *(Blue Pearl)*, JEFFREY TAN *(Blue Pearl)*, SONIA ALBANO *(Diamond)*, HENSON DAVE TAN *(China Jade)*, MICHAEL CIMAFRANCA *(Blue Pearl)* . EDITH CHUA *(Blue Pearl)*, GWENDOLYN PARDO *(Blue Pearl)*, MARIDEN FONDEVILLA *(Borromeo)*, KATHERINE YAP *(Blue Pearl)*, RAFAEL ASPRER, JR. *(Blue Pearl)*, ANALIZA HO *(Star of Asia)*, MA. FELISA JARQUE *(Blue Pearl)*, GINA MARIE SAW *(Mica)* MA. CARMEN AYPA *(Ruby)*, *2nd Row L-R*: PATRICK HORTILLO *(Red Onyx)*, MARIE JOCELYN CANG *(Blue Pearl)* ANTHONETTE MAHINAY *(Blue Pearl)*, MELODY CIMAFRANCA *(Blue Pearl)*, ANGELIQUE CUEVAS *(Blue Pearl)*, ROY RAGAZA *(Blue Pearl)*, MA. FIDES YAP *(Blue Pearl)*, MA. HELEN SORIA *(Borromeo)*, BERNADETTE TAD-Y *(Blue Pearl)*, LAWRENCE YU *(Borromeo)*, JONASH GO *(China Jade)*, MARILOU VARGAS *(Carnelian)*, PETER MICHAEL DELATORE *(Blue Pearl)*, *Bottom Row L-R* : DIVINA REYES *(Ruby)*, MA. FE ASPRER *(Blue Pearl)*, JOSELITO ROS *(Blue Pearl)*, AURORA NATIVIDAD *(Star of Asia)*, JIMMY BARBA *(Mica)*, PHILLIPE BATALLONES *(Citrine)*, CHERYL LYNN MARTINEZ *(Diamond)*, KRISTIN BORROMEO *(Borromeo)*, NILDA MEDALLE *(Star of Asia)*, RAUL ROLDAN *(Gold)*, *Not in photo*: EDWIN GOCUAN *(Blue Pearl)*, HENRY GOCUAN *(Blue Pearl)*, *ANNA LIZA VALARAO (Phoenix)*

PRESIDENT'S CLUB

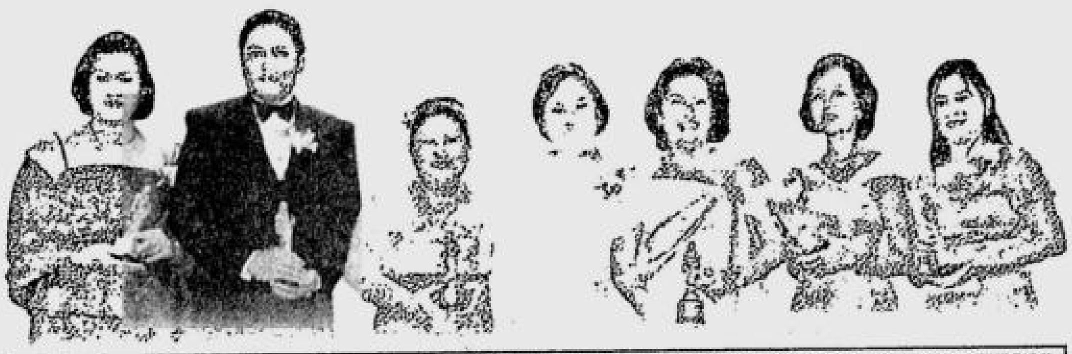
Top L-R . MA. FELISA JARQUE *(Blue Pearl)*, GWENDOLYN PARDO *(Blue Pearl)*, SONIA ALBANO *(Diamond)*, GINA MARIE SAW *(Mica)*, RAFAEL ASPRER JR *(Blue Pearl)* , JUDIN WONG *(Blue Pearl)*, DEAN WONG *(Blue Pearl)*, HENSON DAVE TAN *(China Jade)*. *2nd Row L-R* KATHERINE YAP *(Blue Pearl)*, MA. FE ASPRER *(Blue Pearl)*, BERNADETTE TAD-Y *(Blue Pearl)*, *ALSO IN PHOTO ARE*: VICTOR M. ESPANOL *(SVP and Gen Mgr for Agency Distribution and Marketing)*, BOBBY G MADRID *(President and CEO)*, KEVIN HOLMGREN *(Senior Director, Insurance Prudential Corporation of Asia)*, MA. FIDES YAP *(Blue Pearl)*, THELMA JEAN SALVANA *(Borromeo)* CHERYL LYNN MARTINEZ *(Diamond)*

GRANDMASTER CLUB



L-R : HENSON DAVE TAN *(China Jade)*, KATHERINE YAP *(Blue Pearl)*, ANTHONETTE MAHINAY *(Blue Pearl)*, MA. LOURDES YAP *(BLUE PEARL)*, DEBBIE BORROMEO *(Blue Pearl)*, *Not in photo* EDWIN GOCUAN *(Blue Pearl)*

MASTER CLUB



L-R MARITES MODINA *(Blue Pearl)*, ARTEMIO WAPANIO *(Blue Pearl)*, MARIDEN FONDEVILLA *(Borromeo)*, GWENDOLYN PARDO *(BLUE PEARL)*, BERNADETTE TAD-Y *(Blue Pearl)*, *BELEN ARITAO (Ruby)*, *MARIE JOCELYN CANG (Blue Pearl)*, *Not in photo*: ANNALIZA VALARAO *(Phoenix)*, CRISTINA GO *(China Jade)*

STAR CLUB

Top L-R : LOURDES RAMOS *(Diamond)*, FRANCIA CANLAS *(Blue Sapphire)*, PATRICK HORTILLO *(Red Onyx)*, ANGELIQUE CUEVAS *(BLUE PEARL)*, JONASH GO *(China Jade)* , ELIZABETH TAN *(Mother of Pearl)*, MA. CARMEN AYPA *(Ruby)*, RUBY GOMEZ *(Carnelian)*, MA. CRISTINA MAGALLANO *(Blue Pearl)*, ADORACION TUDIAS *(Tudias)*, ROSINNI LLAMDO *(Red Onyx)*, LAWRENCE YU *(Borromeo)*, *2nd Row L-R* MELODY CIMAFRANCA *(Blue Pearl)*, GINA MARIE SAW *(Mica)*, SONIA ALBANO *(Diamond)*, MICHAEL CIMAFRANCA *(Blue Pearl)* *ALSO IN PHOTO ARE* VICTOR M. ESPANOL *(SVP and Gen. Mgr. for Agency Distribution and Marketing)*, BOBBY G. MADRID *(President and CEO)*, KEVIN HOLMGREN *(Senior Director, Insurance Prudential Corporation of Asia)*, MARILOU VARGAS *(Carnelian)*, RAFAEL ASPRER, JR *(Blue Pearl)*, JEFFREY TAN *(Blue Pearl)*, MA FIDES YAP *(Blue Pearl*, ROY RAGAZA *(Blue Pearl)*, Bottom L-R: LUTHER MICHAEL MAGALLANO *(Blue Pearl)*, JOHN MICHEL ALIASAS *(Alambay)*, THELMA JEAN SALVANA *(Borromeo)*, EDITH CHUA *(Blue Pearl)*, MA. FELISA JARQUE *(Blue Pearl)*, ANALIZA HO *(Star of Asia)*. JUDIN WONG *(Blue Pearl)*, DEAN WONG *(Blue Pearl)*, MA. HELEN SORIA *(Borromeo)*, EMMA ROSE BANCAT *(Iolite)* *Not in photo*. LEAH ALVARADO *(Citrine)*

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EMMANUEL ATILLO	BLUE PEARL
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JOHN YAP	BLUE PEARL
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LEMUEL JUCABAN	RED ONYX
CARIDAD JULIANA MANABAT	JASPER
MARIA PURITA RHODORA YAP	BLUE PEARL
BABY BRIONES	BLUE PEARL
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MARICHEL LIM	BORROMEO
EDLYNN CRISTINA NG	DIAMOND
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EMMANUELA LIM	BLUE PEARL
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PAULINE UCHI	CRYSTAL QUARTZ
LORNA MAXIMIANO	CITRINE
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MERCY DISTOR	BORROMEO
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MA THERESA KHO	ALABASTER
MERLE MINAS	RUBY
EVA SANDICO	CRYSTAL QUARTZ
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GERALDINE SANTA ANA	CITRINE
CYNTHIA FRANDO	GOLD
SHEILA ONG	CHINA JADE
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CECILIA GOCHINGCO	CORAL
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BUTUAN CITY WATER DISTRICT
J.A. Rosales Avenue, Butuan City
Tel. Nos. (085) 342-3145 / 46; Tel. Fax. (085) 341-5008
E-mail address: bcwd2@skyinet.net

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Butuan City Water District hereby invites suppliers and distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid, in accordance with I.R.R. of R.A. 9184, for the supply and delivery of HDPE Pipes, G.I. Pipes and Fittings, Teflon Tape, Brass Fittings and C.I. Fittings.

PACKAGE 1. BRASS ANGLE METER VALVE, ISO (1 ITEM)
Qty. Description
9,840 Pcs. 25mmØ x 25mmØ
ABC: Php2,829,000.00 Bidding Fee: Php 1,500.00
PACKAGE 2. BRASS COUPLING, ISO (2 ITEMS)
9,840 Pcs. 25mmØ; 2,480 Pcs. 32mmØ
ABC: Php1,423,884.00 Bidding Fee: Php 1,500.00
PACKAGE 3. BRASS UNION, ISO AND BRASS CORPORATION STOP, ISO (3 Items)
2,400 Pcs. 25mmØ Brass Union; 400 Pcs. 32mmØ Brass Union; 2,680 Pcs. 32mmØ Corporation Stop
ABC: Php1,671,760.00 Bidding Fee: Php 1,500.00
PACKAGE 4. G.I. PIPES SCH. 40 STD, G.I. FITTINGS SCH. 40 STD and TEFLON TAPE (8 ITEMS)
632 Pcs. Pipe, 1"Ø x 6m; 960 Pcs. Bushing Reducer, 1"Ø x ¾"Ø; 3,280 Pcs. Elbow,1"Ø x 90°; 1,616 Pcs. Plug, ¾"Ø; 4,240 Pcs. Tee Reducer; 1"Ø x 3/4"Ø; 2,120 Pcs. Tee, 1"Ø x 1"Ø; 1,360 Pcs. Union, 1"Ø; 12,895 Rolls Teflon Tape, ¾" x 20m
ABC: Php 1,500,000.00 Bidding Fee: Php 1,500.00
PACKAGE 5. C.I. FITTINGS
Cross Tee Mechanical, BNG, ISO (1 Item):
5 Pcs.100mmØ x 100mmØ
Cross Tee Reducer Mechanical, BNG, ISO (4 Items):
1 Pc. 150mmØ x 100mmØ; 6 Pcs. 200mm
6 Pcs. 200mmØ x 100mmØ;
1 Pc. 250mmØ x 100mmØ;
1 Pc. 250mmØx150mmØ
Flexible Coupling, ISO (7 Items): 70 Pcs. 100mmØ;
32 Pcs. 150mmØ; 36 Pcs. 200mmØ;
6 Pcs. 250mmØ; 6 Pcs. 300mmØ;
30 Pcs. 50mmØ; 18 Pcs. 75mmØ
Gate Valve Mechanical, NRS BNG, ISO (5 Items):
84 Pcs. 100mmØ; 33 Pcs. 150mmØ;
22 Pcs. 200mmØ; 5 Pcs. 50mmØ; 3 Pcs. 75mmØ
Reducer Mechanical, BNG, ISO (5 Items):
8 Pcs. 100mmØ x 75mmØ; 3 Pcs. 150mmØ x 100mmØ; 1 Pc. 150mmØ x 75mmØ; 3 Pcs. 200mmØ x 150mmØ; 3 Pcs. 200mmØ x 75mmØ
Tee Mechanical, BNG, ISO (2 Items): 58 Pcs. 100mmØ x 100mmØ; 2 Pcs. 150mmØ x 150mmØ
Tee Reducer Mechanical, BNG, ISO (6 Items):
1 Pc.150mmØ x 75mmØ; 3 Pcs. 200mmØ x 100mmØ; 1 Pc. 200mmØ x 150mmØ; 1 Pc. 250mmØ x 100mmØ; 1 Pc. 250mmØ x 200mmØ; 1 Pc. 300mmØ x 150mmØ
Valve Box Cover (1 Item): 131 Pcs.
Split Tee, ISO (9 Items): 10 Pcs. 150mmØ x 100mmØ; 10 Pcs. 200mmØ x 100mmØ; 10 Pcs. 200mmØ x 150mmØ; 10 Pcs. 250mmØ x 100mmØ; 10 Pcs. 250mmØ x 150mmØ; 5 Pcs. 250mmØx 200mmØ; 5 Pcs. 300mmØ x 100mmØ; 5 Pcs. 300mmØ x 150mmØ; 5 Pcs. 300mmØ x 200mmØ
Hydrant Head, Residential (1 Item): 5 Pcs. 100mmØ
ABC: Php 4,080,000.00 Bidding Fee: Php 2,000.00
PACKAGE 6. HDPE PIPES, 32MMØ & 25MMØ, SDR 11, ISO (2 ITEMS)
406 Rolls 32mmØ x 90m; 892 Rolls 25mmØ x 150m
ABC: Php 3,600,000.00 Bidding Fee: Php 2,000.00
PACKAGE 7. HDPE PIPES, 63MMØ TO 315MMØ, SDR 11, ISO (7 ITEMS)
17 Pcs. 63mmØ x 6m; 136 Pcs. 90mmØ x 6m; 1,247 Pcs. 110mmØ x 6m; 309 Pcs. 160mmØ x 6m; 301 Pcs. 225mmØ x 6m; 7 Pcs. 280mmØ x 6m; 7 Pcs. 315mmØ x 6m
ABC: Php 7,500,000.00 Bidding Fee: Php 2,000.00

Specifications, details and bidding documents are available to interested applicants upon payment of a non-refundable fee as indicated per package from January 25, 2005 to February 5 , 2005, at the BAC Secretariat during its business hours.

Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at the Training Hall of BCWD Admin. Building on the following dates:
February 8, 2005 9:00A.M.-Brass Fittings;
2:00P.M.-GI Pipes,GI Fittings &Teflon Tapes
February 9, 2005 9:00 A.M.-C.I. Fittings
2:00 P.M.-HDPE Pipes

Submission and opening of sealed bids shall be at the same venue, which shall follow on:
March 3, 2005 9:00A.M.-Brass Fittings
2:00P.M.-GI Pipes,GI Fittings &Teflon Tapes
March 4, 2005 9:00A.M.-C.I. Fittings
2:00P.M.-HDPE Pipes

Butuan City Water District reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defect or formality therein, to assume no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of their bids, and to accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) JORGE L. GUDUYO, C.E.
Chair, Bids and Awards Committee

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16th University of the Philippines Job Fair

THE UP Office of Counseling and Guidance (UP OCG) together with UP Junior Philippine Institute of Accountants (UP JPIA) and UP Alumni Association (UPAA) successfully held the **Notch UP 2005**: The **16th University of the Philippines Job Fair** at the Ang Bahay ng Alumni, UP Campus, Diliman, last Jan. 24 to 28, 2005. The week-long event opened opportunities to both the over 100 companies and the eager and fresh graduating students and alumni from UP and other universities. Also, early this January, UP JPIA went all out in the war against piracy by holding a week-long celebration full of exhilarating activities that surely made the youth more aware of this battle against piracy. *Shame on Sham: astig 2b orig!* truly brought great impacts on the youth. UP JPIA will never cease to create and organize endeavors such as these. This tradition of excellence, leadership and selfless service will continue on for the coming years because this organization is composed of students who relentlessly and untiringly share a part of themselves to others, supported by both private and government institutions who continuously believe in UP JPIA.

Notch UP 2005
16th University Job Fair
University of the Philippines
Tel. nos.: 926-4162/ 929-5835
notchup2005@yahoo.com

CLCI Workshops for February

THE CENTER for Leadership and Change, Inc. (CLCI), will be conducting the following premium public workshops from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the CLCI Training Room, 4/F Ateneo Professional Schools, Horacio V. de la Costa St., Makati: Measuring ROI of Training and Performance Improvement Programs – apply skills of research and measurement to effectively assess ROI and performance improvement (Feb. 8 to 9); Power Principle - influence others more effectively towards desired results in your personal and professional life (Feb. 10 to 11); What Matters Most - discover principles that lead to work-life balance and improved relationships (Feb. 15); 7 Habits, An Overview - get a preview of our most popular program, *the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* in one afternoon (Feb 28). Interested parties may call John Lopez or Denise Mangiliman at 817-2726 local 123/116 or email them at john@clci.ph or denise@clci.ph. CLCI is the authorized distributor for FranklinCovey products and services in the Philippines.

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

The Office of the Representative of the United Nations Population Fund, Manila is seeking applications from competent candidates to fill the post of

UNFPA Programme Manager for Mindanao for the Mindanao Programme Management Office in Mindanao.

Under the guidance and supervision of the UNFPA Representative and working in close collaboration with the designated UNFPA Area Officers, the Programme Manager shall have overall responsibility for project operations in Mindanao, particularly in the provinces of Maguindanao, Lanao Sur, Sulu, Tawi-tawi, Sultan Kudarat and Cotabato Province under the 6th UNFPA Country Programme, effectively managing internal and external resources in order to achieve results. More specifically, the Programme Manager has the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Leads a team of technical and support staff and works closely with the regional, provincial and municipal implementing partners to ensure the implementation of the population, reproductive health and gender components of the 6th CP in the project areas in Mindanao.
2. Organizes the Mindanao Office, defines roles and responsibilities of staff, sets up systems and procedures based on UNFPA rules and regulations, and manages its day-to-day operations.
3. Prepares annual and quarterly operational plans, develops monitoring tools and installs the project database
4. Monitors the progress of attaining provincial and municipal Annual Work Plan outputs and programme outcomes; addresses operational problems and issues; and ensures that regional, provincial and municipal activities are carried out in accordance with agreed UNFPA and government policies and procedures and on a timely basis.
5. Reviews, analyzes and consolidates the annual and quarterly work and financial plans and project reports submitted by the Mindanao provinces and municipalities and submits these documents to the UNFPA Central Office based on agreed deadlines.
6. Coordinates the needs and requirements of the programme in Mindanao from the national and regional down to the provincial and municipal levels and facilitates the requests for technical, administrative and financial assistance.
7. Establishes and maintains linkages with other related projects, institutions and inter-agency committees in the area.and keeps abreast of developments that may have implications on the implementation of the programme in Mindanao.
8. Prepares and submits quarterly and annual progress reports to the Central Office.
9. Perform other duties that may be assigned by the UNFPA Representative.

Qualifications:
Must have a Masters Degree in Public Health or related fields and preferably be a doctor of medicine or have a bachelors degree in a social science field
Must have at least five years of solid experience in the planning and management of population, reproductive health and gender projects
Familiarity with UN rules and procedures is an asset
Must possess excellent interpersonal, communication (both oral and written) and negotiation skills
Exercises critical judgment with regard to institutional policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure consistency with the organization's mandate
Encourages full participation of all staff members in office processes and decisions while ensuring commitment to organizational vision and priorities
Must be proficient in MS Word, MS Excel, Powerpoint and internet applications
Preferably a resident of Mindanao
Willing to travel to conflict-affected areas and be based in Davao.

Applicants are requested to send their application letters indicating post title together with completed UN Personal History Forms (P.11), available at www.unfpa.org.ph/jobs to:

The Country Representative
United Nations Population Fund
P.O. Box 7285 DAPO
1300 Domestic Road
Pasay City, Metro Manila

Or through emailat officemail@unfpa.org.ph

Salary: Negotiable based on experience and qualifications

Deadline for submission of applications: 11 February 2005 (Only short-listed applicants will be notified).

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

The Office of the Representative of the United Nations Population Fund, Manila is seeking applications from competent candidates to fill the post of

Reproductive Health Adviser for the UNFPA Programme Management Office in Mindanao.

Under the technical guidance of the UNFPA Programme Officer for RH and the immediate administrative supervision of the Programme Manager, the RH Adviser shall provide technical assistance to the UNFPA-assisted provinces, municipalities and NGOs in Mindanao in reproductive health, particularly in the thematic areas of: a) family planning, b) maternal health, c) STD/HIV/AIDS prevention and management; and d) adolescent reproductive health. More specifically, he or she shall perform the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Assist in the review of the RH research instruments to be used in the baseline surveys and community assessments. Provide technical guidance during the conduct of the survey and assist in the analysis and interpretation of results.
2. Organize the RH team composed of the PHO, MHOs and the Chiefs of the provincial and district hospitals and mobilize them in the conduct health facilities and training needs assessments in UNFPA-assisted provinces and municipalities.
3. Using the survey and assessment results, and in consultation with the LGUs and NGOs: a) identify the key RH needs of the provinces and municipalities; b) validate whether the RH activities in the AWPs and the underlying strategies respond to these needs; and c) make adjustments in the AWPs and prepare the comprehensive RH technical assistance plan.
4. Implement the technical assistance plan. Assist the RH team in the following:
    a. Installation of the RH protocols and standard practice guidelines in all the health facilities.
    b. Preparation of the training plan for service providers.
    c. Preparation of the IEC/ advocacy (communication) plan.
    d. Upgrading of health facilities to meet Sentrong Sigla and Philhealth accreditation standards.
    e. Provision of technical updates on the latest developments in RH.
5. Coordinate the timing and implementation of national NGO RH inputs to the provinces and municipalities and ensure that the provinces and municipalities are prepared to receive the assistance.
6. Conduct regular monitoring of the RH activities of the provinces and municipalities together with UNFPA Programme Officers, MHDO, the regional offices of national RH implementing partners and the Area Project Coordinators and assist in the technical review of the quarterly work and financial plans to track progress in the achievement of outputs and address problems and bottlenecks.
7. Assist the UNFPA Programme Officer for RH and DOH in the review, development and improvement of RH training modules, protocols, frameworks and RH monitoring tools.
8. Serve as resource person or trainor during capacity building activities
9. Prepare and submit monthly performance reports to the Programme Manager on the technical assistance activities undertaken for the provinces and municipalities vis-à-vis the comprehensive technical assistance plan.
10. Perform other duties that may be assigned by the UNFPA Representative or the Programme Manager.

Qualifications:
Must be a Doctor of Medicine and must have at least five to seven years of solid technical experience, whether in service delivery, IEC, training or research, in the areas of family planning, maternal health, STD/ HIV/AIDS prevention and management and adolescent reproductive health, among other RH elements.
Must possess excellent conceptual and analytical skills, strategic thinking and results orientation
Must have very good interpersonal and communication (oral and written) skills
Must be proficient in MS Word, MS Excel, Powerpoint, and internet applications
Preferably a resident of Mindanao
Willing to travel to conflict-affected areas and be based in Davao.

Applicants are requested to send their application letters indicating post title together with completed UN Personal History Forms (P.11), available at www.unfpa.org.ph/jobs to:

The Country Representative
United Nations Population Fund
P.O. Box 7285 DAPO
1300 Domestic Road
Pasay City, Metro Manila

Or through emailat officemail@unfpa.org.ph

Salary: Negotiable based on experience and qualifications

Deadline for submission of applications: 11 February 2005 (Only short-listed applicants will be notified).

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

The Office of the Representative of the United Nations Population Fund, Manila is seeking applications from competent candidates to fill the post of

Administrative-cum-Finance Assistant for the UNFPA Programme Management Office in Mindanao.

Under the technical guidance of the UNFPA Administrative-cum-Finance Assistant and the immediate supervision of the Programme Manager, the PMO Administrative –cum-Finance Assistant will perform the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Assists the Programme Manager in developing and operationalizing the manual of operations, setting up systems and procedures for the Programme Management Office (PMO) based on UNFPA rules and regulations.
2. Handles all correspondence and communications of the Programme Management Office. Properly labels and files all documents, personnel records, reports, letters, etc. Takes notes and sends out official communications. Takes and makes official calls.
3. Attends to PMO office needs and supervises the Driver/Messenger.
4. Conducts and maintains an updated inventory of office vehicles, equipment and supplies.
5. Handles all financial transactions of the PMO. Prepares purchase requests for approval of the Programme Manager. Procures equipment and supplies based on UNFPA rules and regulations and sets up an efficient distribution system.
6. Arranges for the conduct of the office audit.
7. Provides technical assistance to the provincial AFAs in Mindanao, orienting and assisting them in the implementation of UNFPA administrative and financial rules and regulations.
8. Monitors the financial transactions in the provinces on a regular basis.
9. Reviews all financial forms and reports submitted by the Mindanao provinces and municipalities on a quarterly basis for completeness, accuracy and consistency and consolidates them for submission to UNFPA Finance in Manila.
10. Serves as rapporteur and disburses and liquidate funds for PMO-organized meetings and activities.
11. Performs other tasks that may be assigned by the UNFPA AFA or the Programme Manager.

Qualifications:
Must be a graduate of business administration, accounting or HR related courses., preferably a CPA.
Must have at least 5 years experience in accounting and finance, administration and human resource management, working with foreign-assisted projects.
Familiarity with UNFPA rules and procedures will be an asset.
Must be proficient in MS Word, MS Excel, Powerpoint and internet applications
Demonstrates and promotes teamwork, integrity and impartiality in all matters affecting his/her work.
Preferably a resident of Mindanao
Willing to travel to conflict-affected areas and be based in Davao.

Applicants are requested to send their application letters indicating post title together with completed UN Personal History Forms (P.11), available at www.unfpa.org.ph/jobs to:

The Country Representative
United Nations Population Fund
P.O. Box 7285 DAPO
1300 Domestic Road
Pasay City, Metro Manila

Or through email at officemail@unfpa.org.ph

Salary: Negotiable based on experience and qualifications

Deadline for submission of applications: 11 February 2005 (Only short-listed applicants will be notified).

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

The Office of the Representative of the United Nations Population Fund, Manila is seeking applications from competent candidates to fill the post of

Driver/Messenger for the UNFPA Programme Management Office in Mindanao.

Under the overall supervision and guidance of the Programme Manager and the immediate supervision of the AFA, the Driver/Messenger shall perform the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Provide efficient and timely transport services to the Programme Manager, Area Coordinators, UNFPA Central Office personnel, AFA and other authorized passengers in Mindanao particularly in the provinces of Maguindanao, Lanao Sur, Sultan Kudarat and Cotabato.
2. Maintain the good condition of the vehicle and ensure its regular check-up.
3. Address minor vehicle trouble.
4. Accomplish the vehicle daily log.
5. Ensure the security and safety of the passengers and the vehicle. Coordinate with the Security Officer in Mindanao and make sure that the proper travel clearance has been issued immediately prior to the trip. Take all necessary precautions during travel and ensure that vehicle is prepared for any emergency.
6. Deliver/pick-up documents and materials.
7. Extend other support services such as operation of the LCD, camera, video camera, xerox and fax machines, binder, etc.
8. Perform other tasks that may be assigned by the Programme Manager and the AFA.

Qualifications
Must at least be a high school graduate with training in engine mechanic or related fields.
Must have at least five years experience in professional driving, engine maintenance and messengerial work preferably with foreign-assisted projects in Mindanao
Demonstrates teamwork, flexibility, courage and presence of mind.
Preferably a resident of Mindanao
Willing to travel in conflict affected areas and be based in area of assignment.

Applicants are requested to send their application letters indicating post title together with completed UN Personal History Forms (P.11), available at www.unfpa.org.ph/jobs to:

The Country Representative
United Nations Population Fund
P.O. Box 7285 DAPO
1300 Domestic Road
Pasay City, Metro Manila

Or through email at officemail@unfpa.org.ph

Salary: Negotiable based on experience and qualifications

Deadline for submission of applications: 11 February 2005 (Only short-listed applicants will be notified).

NFA grants P67.4 M incentives to farmers

THE NATIONAL Food Authority granted more than P67.4 million incentives to 764 farmers' organizations (FOs) that sold their palay harvest to the agency last year. NFA Administrator Gregorio Y. Tan, Jr. said that the incentives were accumulated when the FOs cooperative development incentive fund (CDIF) accounts. The CDIF is a monetary incentive given to FOs amounting to 25 centavos for every kilogram of palay they sell to the agency's warehouse or buying stations. The amount is in addition to the delivery and drying incentives worth 25 centavos or a total of 50 centavos per kilogram of palay sold to the agency. The CDIF accumulated balance could be used as payment for the use of NFA's drying, milling, packaging, transporting and warehouse facilities. It could also be used to purchase seeds and fertilizers and as collateral to agri-related loans, Tan cited. Other uses of the CDIF include the farmers' acquisition of post harvest facilities, purchase of production inputs like seeds and fertilizers, investment equity in Area Marketing Cooperatives and as subsidy for training expenses of the FOs, Tan said. For further inquiry on NFA Cooperative Development Incentive Fund, the public may send text messages through 0917-6210927.

Marissa Del Mar one-in-one with Tony Lopez

UP CLOSE and Personal with Marissa Del Mar has been successful in this format that underscored the achievements of many celebrities in sports, the entertainment industry, businessmen, politicians and government people and more specially the common Pinoy. On the next episode of Up Close and Personal with Marissa Del Mar, will feature one of the elite journalists in the person of Tony Lopez, the president, publisher and the editor-on-chief of The BizNewsAsia the largest business and weekly newsmagazine in the Philippines Today. Lopez has a remarkable 34 years of professional journalism. He is formerly senior correspondent of the Asiaweek Magazine, the Hongkong-based subsidiary of Time Warner New York. He retired in 2001 after 25 years and put up his own weekly magazine. During his stint at Asiaweek, he helped put the Philippines on the world map for his objective and balanced reporting. Get to know more of Lopez as Marissa Del Mar will have a one-on-one candid talk about his views on the current events of the country and about top officials in the Philippine Government that will be aired on Feb. 1 over IBC13 at 11 p.m.

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Monico Jacob, STI CEO/President
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UNFPA

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

The Office of the Representative of the United Nations Population Fund, Manila is seeking applications from competent candidates to fill the post of

Area Project Coordinators for the UNFPA Programme Management Office in Mindanao.

Under the immediate supervision of the Programme Manager and in close working partnerships with the UNFPA Area Officers, three Area Project Coordinators (APCS) covering the provinces of Sulu, Tawi-tawi, Maguindanao, Lanao Sur, Sultan Kudarat and Cotabato including the Davao-based NGOs, will be hired to serve as the frontline link of UNFPA with the implementing partners. They will perform the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Assist the provinces and municipalities in the setting up of the project management units within the LGUs, ensuring that the necessary legal issuances have been passed, focal persons for the project have been properly designated at the provincial, municipal and NGO levels, and that office space, furniture and basic supplies have been provided.
2. Working closely with the designated focal persons, assist in the orientation of provincial and municipal officials, service providers and other stakeholders about the 6th CP and its major components and in the firming up of the Annual Work Plans which spell out the major deliverables and activities of the LGU during the year.
3. Provide technical assistance to the province and municipalities in the preparation of quarterly workplans and results-based reports and ensure the timely submission of these document to the Mindanao PMO.
4. Coordinate the conduct of inter- and intra- provincial and municipal activities such as the community assessments and baseline surveys, the training of service providers, IEC and advocacy campaigns, etc.
5. Together with the Mindanao Health Development Office (MHDO) and the regional offices of national implementing partners, monitor the progress of implementation of provinces and municipalities vis-à-vis outputs and targets on a regular basis and address operational problems as they arise
6. Facilitate the request of provinces, municipalities and NGOs for technical assistance from the region, national agencies and UNFPA.
7. Serve as resource person or trainor for capacity building activities.
8. Document program activities in area of responsibility and submit monthly reports to Programme Manager.
9. As part of the PMO, work harmoniously with the rest of the team, sharing knowledge and information openly and displaying cultural and gender sensitivity.
10. Performs other duties that may be assigned by the UNFPA Representative or the Programme Manager.

Qualifications:
Must be a college graduate with a bachelors degree in the social sciences preferably health-related
Must have at least 3 to 5 years experience working in reproductive health, population and gender projects preferably at the LGU/community level.
Must have excellent interpersonal, communication (oral and written), facilitating and negotiating skills.
Must be proficient in MS Word, MS Excel, Powerpoint and internet applications.
Willing to travel in conflict-affected areas and be based in the area of assignment..

Applicants are requested to send their application letters indicating post title together with completed UN Personal History Forms (P.11), available at www.unfpa.org.ph/jobs to:

The Country Representative
United Nations Population Fund
P.O. Box 7285 DAPO
1300 Domestic Road
Pasay City, Metro Manila

Or through emailat officemail@unfpa.org.ph

Salary: Negotiable based on experience and qualifications

Deadline for submission of applications: 11 February 2005 (Only short-listed applicants will be notified).

UNFPA

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

The Office of the Representative of the United Nations Population Fund, Manila is seeking applications from competent candidates to fill the post of

Population and Gender Adviser for the UNFPA Programme Management Office in Mindanao.

Under the technical guidance of the UNFPA Programme Officers for PDS and Gender and the immediate administrative supervision of the Programme Manager, the PDS and Gender Adviser shall provide technical assistance to the UNFPA-assisted provinces, municipalities and NGOs in Mindanao in population and development and in gender and VAW. More specifically, he or she shall perform the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Provide technical guidance during the conduct of the baseline survey in Mindanao and assist in the analysis and interpretation of the PDS and gender results.
2. Organize the PDS/advocacy teams and VAW Task Forces and mobilize them in the conduct of training needs assessments of local officials, prospective advocates and VAW service providers in UNFPA-assisted provinces and municipalities in Mindanao.
3. Using the survey and assessment results, and in consultation with the LGUs and NGOs: a) identify the key PDS and gender needs of the provinces and municipalities; b) validate whether the PDS and gender activities in the AWPs and the underlying strategies respond to these needs; and c) make adjustments in the AWPs and prepare the comprehensive PDS and gender technical assistance plans
4. Implement the technical assistance plan. Assist the PDS/advocacy team and the VAW Task Force in the following:
    a. Preparation of the POPDEV training plan for LGUs, advocacy training plan for prospective advocates and VAW training plan for service providers and the conduct of training;
    b. Preparation of the advocacy (communication) plan and conduct of the advocacy campaigns.
    c. Compliance with LGU counterpart requirements such as resolution supporting RH, budget allocation for contraceptives and Philhealth premiums, personnel in health facilities, construction/upgrading of health facilities.
    d. Provision of technical updates on the latest developments in PDS and gender..
5. Coordinate the timing and implementation of national and NGO PDS and gender inputs to the provinces and municipalities and ensure that the provinces and municipalities are prepared to receive the assistance.
6. Conduct regular monitoring of the PDS and gender activities of the provinces and municipalities together with UNFPA Programme Officers, the regional offices of POPCOM and other national implementing partners and the Area Project Coordinators and assist in the technical review of the quarterly work and financial plans to track progress in the achievement of outputs and address problems and bottlenecks.
7. Assist the UNFPA Programme Officers for PDS and Gender and POPCOM in the review, development and improvement of training modules, protocols, frameworks and monitoring tools.
8. Serve as resource person or trainor during capacity building activities
9. Prepare and submit monthly performance reports to the Programme Manager on the technical assistance activities undertaken for the provinces and municipalities vis-à-vis the comprehensive technical assistance plan.
10. Perform other duties that may be assigned by the UNFPA Representative or the Programme Manager.

Qualifications:
Must have a Masters Degree in Public Administration or any of the social sciences. Must have at least five to seven years of solid technical experience in population, gender and development.
Must possess excellent conceptual and analytical skills, strategic thinking and results orientation
Must have very good interpersonal and communication (oral and written) skills
Must be proficient in MS Word, MS Excel, Powerpoint, and internet applications
Preferably a resident of Mindanao
Willing to travel to conflict-affected areas and be based in Davao.

Applicants are requested to send their application letters indicating post title together with completed UN Personal History Forms (P.11), available at www.unfpa.org.ph/jobs to:

The Country Representative
United Nations Population Fund
P.O. Box 7285 DAPO
1300 Domestic Road
Pasay City, Metro Manila

Or through emailat officemail@unfpa.org.ph

Salary: Negotiable based on experience and qualifications

Deadline for submission of applications: 11 February 2005 (Only short-listed applicants will be notified).

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Matthew 11:28

IN LOVING MEMORY
ON THE FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY
of

Nelia M. Purificacion

May 15, 1940 – January 31, 2004

One long painful year has passed since God took you away from us. How we miss your happy face, your wonderful smile and the caring heart you had for everyone. You are truly missed and loved by everyone you touched in your life. You will always be in our thoughts, prayers and forever in our hearts. We love you and always will.

**Basilio, Raul, Arlene,
Tom, Leah & Tess**

DR. GREGORIO J. MENDIOLA

*Peacefully joined our Creator on January 29, 2005
at the age of 97.*

His bereaved children **Gregorio Jr.**, **Teresita**, **Luis**, **Diosdado**, **Renato**, and **Anna Liza**, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the La Funeraria Paz, in Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be at the Holy Cross Memorial Park tomorrow, February 1, 2005, after the 7:00 a.m. Mass at La Funeraria Paz.

In Loving Memory
On the 20th Death Anniversary of

HONORIO POBLADOR, JR.

February 1, 2005

Holy Masses will be offered in his memory on February 1, 2005 at the following churches:

SACRED HEART PARISH Welfareville, City of Mandaluyong	6:00 a.m.
MARY THE QUEEN PARISH Little Baguio, San Juan, Metro Manila	6:00 a.m.
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila	7:15 a.m.
SAN MIGUEL PRO-CATHEDRAL Gen. Solano, San Miguel, Manila	7:00 a.m.
OUR LADY OF SORROWS PARISH F.B. Harrison Street, Pasay City	6:00 a.m.
SAN FELIPE NERI PARISH City of Mandaluyong	6:00 p.m.
DON BOSCO MAKATI Pasay Road, City of Makati	6:00 p.m.
SAINT ANDREW PARISH Bel-Air, City of Makati	6:30 p.m.
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO Forbes Park, City of Makati	6:00 p.m.
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGUORI CHURCH Magallanes Village, City of Makati	6:00 p.m.
ST. SEBASTIAN CATHEDRAL Bacolod City	7:00 a.m.
SACRED HEART SHRINE Bacolod City	6:00 a.m.
SAN ANTONIO PARISH Bacolod City	7:00 a.m.

His family requests relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

In Loving Memory
on the 18th Death Anniversary of

RUFINO R. SANTOS, JR.

Who passed away on January 31, 1987

Holy Masses will be offered at the following churches:

St. Andrew, the Apostle Parish Nicanor Garcia St., Bel Air, Makati City	6:30 AM, 12:15 NN & 6:30 PM
The National Shrine of Sacred Heart Dao, Makati City	7:00 AM, 12:15 NN & 6:00 PM
St. John Bosco Parish Arnaiz St., Makati City	7:30 AM & 6:00 PM
Santuario de San Antonio Parish Forbes Park, Makati City	12:15 NN
St. Roque Parish Church Pateros, Metro Manila	6:00 PM
San Pedro Parish Church San Pedro, Laguna	6:00 AM
St. Francis Church Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City	7:00 AM
St. Paul Parish Church Richmond, British Columbia, Canada	8:00 AM
Holy Rosary Cathedral Vancouver, B.C., Canada	12:10 NN

His wife, **Aurora**; children **Ronald & Cherry**, **Roy (†)**, **Rico & Jenny** and grandson **RV** request relatives and friends to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

ROBERTO (BOBBY) R. LITTAUA

*Peacefully joined our Lord
on January 29, 2005 at the age of 69.*

His loving wife, WINIFRED
Children FRANCIS (†) and MARA, EGAY, RAOUL and MARJ, COOKIE, ANNA and MIKE, AGNES, BOBET and AGNES, MEI;
Grandchildren MAISIE, PATINKA, BOJO, FRANCO, ANDRE, ISIS, GARIE;
relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Mortuary of Our Lady of Fatima Parish Church Philamlife Village, Pamplona 2, Las Piñas City,

The funeral mass will be held on Thursday, February 3, 2005 at 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

Interment will follow at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

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9 DON RAFAEL STREET, DON ENRIQUE HEIGHTS BARANGAY HOLY SPIRIT, 1127 QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES
TELEPHONE 952-2512 • TELEFAX 952-6660 • eMAIL: fdagen@surfshop.net.ph

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

Date : January 31, 2005
Contract Identification No. : FDA-2005-P01
World Bank Grant No. TF026783

1. The PARTNERSHIP OF PHILIPPINE SUPPORT SERVICE AGENCIES, INC. (PHILSSA) has received a grant from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of UPSCALING URBAN POOR COMMUNITY RENEWAL SCHEME-PROJECT and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for FDA P-1 2004 for Site Development of Sitio Dormitory Brgy. Nagkaisang Nayon Novaliches, Quezon City covering Earthwork, Road Concreting Works, Drainage System and Water Distribution as Package I. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*
2. The Foundation for Development Alternatives, Inc. (FDA), the Implementing Agency of PHILSSA invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the construction of Land Development of Sitio Dormitory, Brgy. Nagkaisang Nayon, Novaliches, Quezon City covering Earthwork, Road Concreting Works, Drainage System and Water Distribution System as Package I.
3. Bidding documents (and additional copies) may be purchased at Foundation for Development Alternatives Inc. (FDA) at No. 9 Don Rafael St., Don Enrique Heights Subd. Holy Spirit Quezon City for a non-refundable fee of P2,500.00 for each set. Interested bidders may examine the bid documents and obtain further information at the same address. For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a Pre-bid Conference will be held on February 16, 2005 at 2:00 in the afternoon at Foundation for Development Alternatives Inc, (FDA) at No. 9 Don Rafael St., Don Enrique Heights Subdivision, Holy Spirit, Quezon City.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of 120 calendar days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by security of 2.5% of the Contractor's bid and shall be delivered to Foundation for Development Alternatives Inc, (FDA) at No.9 Don Rafael St., Don Enrique Heights Subdivision, Holy Spirit, Quezon City on or before March 3, 2005, not later than 2:00 in the afternoon, at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

(PDI–Jan. 31, 2005)

FOUNDATION for DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES, Inc.
9 DON RAFAEL STREET, DON ENRIQUE HEIGHTS BARANGAY HOLY SPIRIT, 1127 QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES
TELEPHONE 952-2512 • TELEFAX 952-6660 • eMAIL: fdagen@surfshop.net.ph

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

Date January 31, 2005
Contract Identification No. FDA-2005-P02
World Bank Grant No. TF026783

1. The PARTNERSHIP OF PHILIPPINE SUPPORT SERVICE AGENCIES, INC. (PHILSSA) has received a grant from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of UPSCALING URBAN POOR COMMUNITY RENEWAL SCHEME-PROJECT and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for FDA P-2 2004 for Water source Development of Sitio Dormitory Brgy. Nagkaisang Nayon Novaliches, Quezon City covering Construction of Elevated Water Tank, Deepwell Drilling and Pumphouse facilities as Package II. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*
2. The Foundation for Development Alternatives, Inc. (FDA), the Implementing Agency of PHILSSA invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Water source Development of Sitio Dormitory, Brgy. Nagkaisang Nayon, Novaliches, Quezon City covering Construction of Elevated Water Tank, Deepwell Drilling and Pumphouse facilities as Package II.
3. Bidding documents (and additional copies) may be purchased at Foundation for Development Alternatives Inc. (FDA) at No. 9 Don Rafael St., Don Enrique Heights Subd. Holy Spirit Quezon City for a non-refundable fee of P2,500.00 for each set. Interested bidders may examine the bid documents and obtain further information at the same address. For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a Pre-bid Conference will be held on February 16, 2005 at 2:00 in the afternoon at Foundation for Development Alternatives Inc, (FDA) at No. 9 Don Rafael St., Don Enrique Heights Subdivision, Holy Spirit, Quezon City.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of 120 calendar days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by security of 2.5% of the Contractor's bid and shall be delivered to Foundation for Development Alternatives Inc, (FDA) at No.9 Don Rafael St., Don Enrique Heights Subdivision, Holy Spirit, Quezon City on or before March 3, 2005, not later than 2:00 in the afternoon, at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

(PDI–Jan. 31, 2005)

National Conference on Oral Surgery

THE PHILIPPINE College of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (PCOMS), a specialty group affiliate of the Philippine Dental Association (PDA) and the International Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (IAOMS) will be holding its 28th National Conference on Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and 45th Annual Convention and Conferment of New Fellows at the Manila Pavilion, U.N. Avenue, Ermita, Manila on January 30. According to PCOMS President-elect and General Chairman, Dr. Roberto M. Tajonera, the scientific sessions will have five foreign lectures to talk on various topics of special surgical interest: Alveolar Bone Grafting in Cleft Lip and Palate (Prof. Samman of Hongkong); Diagnosis and Management of Implant Complications (Prof. Kao Shoti-Yen of Taiwan); Immediate Loading: Dental Implants (Dr. Myra Elliot of Singapore); Advanced Dental Implantology (Dr. Ragen Gunaseelan of India); and Oral Cancer (Prof. Kaniche Seto of Japan). For inquiries and registration, interested parties can call Dr. Roberto Tajonera, 0927-8033328/ 733-0053, Dr. Mario Esquillo, 0917-8573852/ 723-2447 or Dr. Rene Lasquete, 0918-9190962.

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IN THE MATTER OF THE TESTATE ESTATE OF THE LATE PAZ A. DE TUASON.

MARIA PAZ GODINEZ LOPEZ, SP. PROC. 03-105769
Petitioner,
x-------------------------x

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

LETTERS TESTAMENTARY having been issued in the above-entitled case in favor of MARIA PAZ GODINEZ LOPEZ residing at No. 7 King Fisher, Green Meadows, Quezon City Notice is hereby issued requiring all persons having claims for money against the decedent PAZ DE TUAZON, arising from contact, express or implied, whether the same be due, not due or contingent, for funeral expenses and expenses of the last sickness of the said decedent and judgment for money against her, to file said claims with this Office within six (6) months after the date of the first publication of this Notice, serving a copy thereof upon the aforementioned MARIA PAZ GODINEZ LOPEZ, the appointed Executrix of the above-entitled case

The Executrix is hereby ordered to cause the immediate publication of this Notice in a newspaper of general circulation for three (3) consecutive weeks and its posting for the same period in four (4) public places in the city of Manila, decedent's last place of residence.

WITNESS THE HONORABLE TITA BUGHAO ALISUAG, this 19th day of November 2004, Manila City, Philippines

(Sgd.) ROSALINDA S. MEDINACELI-GEPIGON
Clerk of Court V

(PDI- Jan 24, 31 & Feb 7, 2005)

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MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

'Championing optimism, pushing reforms'

AS WE enter 2005, we recognize the serious economic challenges facing us as a nation. This is hardly a time for "business as usual"; rather, it is a time for a more involved business community, it is a time for building confidence. Changes are needed to the business environment, from the way we pay taxes to our government, to the way these are rechannelled to provide the physical and social infrastructure that support our economy. We need to spur investments that provide employment to Filipinos.

In 2005, the MAP will support reforms that are essential in sustaining economic progress and attracting more investments, both local and foreign.

And while we recognize that much has to be done, we acknowledge that we have much to be proud of as a country. We operate in a moderate-growth economy, with inflation under control despite cost-push pressures on energy prices. Countryside incomes are up with the strong performance of agriculture last year. Our judiciary has made recent decisions that give us reason to cheer. We have a free press that, despite some overenthusiasm, acts as a strong watchdog against excesses in society. Our democratic roots have been deepened by another electoral exercise. Many businesses—we hope your own—are enjoying reasonable profits.

The MAP is an organization of managers and leaders. And as such, we must reject mediocrity and strive for the reforms that will achieve excellence and make our country better. Even when there is short-term pain to the government and ourselves. And as leaders, we must inspire others, our countrymen and foreign investors alike, to expand their stake in the community in which we live. We must believe in ourselves, as no outside investors will take risks that we at MAP are unwilling to take first.

MAP's programs and activities in 2005 will therefore focus on " Championing Optimism, Pushing Reforms."

MAP PROFILE

The Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) is a 54-year-old management organization whose 747 members (as of Jan. 20, 2005) represent a cross-section of CEOs, COOs and other top management practitioners from the top local and multinational companies operating in the Philippines. MAP also has some top management educators and government officials as its members. Membership in MAP is on individual basis and by invitation only.

OBJECTIVES

1. Promote management excellence
2. Help uplift the standards of management practice in the country
3. Maintain closer relations among top management executives
4. Promote a broad exchange of relevant management information and practices
5. Assist educational and other institutions in addressing the needs of the business community in so far as the management career is concerned

Simon Paterno is MAP president for 2005

SIMON "Mon" R. Paterno, managing director of Credit Suisse First Boston (Hong Kong) Ltd Philippine Branch, is the president of the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) for 2005. MAP is a 54-year-old management organization whose 750 members represent a cross-section of CEOs, COOs and other top management practitioners from the top local and multinational companies operating in the Philippines. MAP also has some top management educators and government officials as its members.

Prior to joining CSFB in September 2004, Paterno was president/CEO of the Development Bank of the Philippines. Paterno spent 18 years with JP Morgan & Co, with stints in New York and Hong Kong. He has worked on the most significant financing and M&A transactions in the Philippines since 1990, including:

- The Republic of the Philippines Brady debt restructuring (1991), debut US$ issue (1992), the Philippine Brady Exchange (1995), debut Euro issue (1996)
- The mergers of Metrobank/Solidbank, Equitable/PCI Bank, BPI/Citytrust, BPI/Far East Bank; the acquisitions of Petron, Philippine Airlines, La Tondeña and the food business of Procter & Gamble
- Bond and equity financings for San Miguel, SM Prime, Ayala Corp, National Power Corp, PNOC, PCI Bank, PNB.

In 1997, he was named managing director of JP Morgan, with responsibility for coverage of Asian sovereign clients at the start of the Asian financial crisis. He led the project teams that advised the Indonesian Bank Restructuring Agency (Ibra) and its Malaysian counterpart, Danaharta.

Paterno received his MBA from Stanford University and his AB Honors Program in Economics, cum laude, from the Ateneo de Manila University. He is a 1999 TOYM awardee for investment banking. He has served on the Board of the Bankers Association of the Philippines and as chair of LGU Guarantee Corp.

Other officers of the MAP for 2005 are Evelyn "Evelyn" R. Singson, president of eBusiness Services Inc, as vice president; Jaime "Jimmy" Y. Ladao, president of Dun & Bradstreet Philippines Inc, as treasurer; and Cynthia "Cynthia" R. Mamon, president and managing director of Sun Microsystems Philippines Inc, as secretary.

The other members of the MAP Board of Governors are Nieves "Nieves" R. Confesor, professor of Asian Institute of Management, Francisco "Frank" C. Eizmendi Jr, president and CEO of Institute of Corporate Directors, Francisco "Kaiku" H. Licuanan III, chair of Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, Napoleon "Polly" L. Nazareno, president of Smart and PLDT, and Peter L. Wallace, president of Wallace Business Forum.

Major Activities/Projects

1. "Management Man of the Year" Award
2. Annual MAP International CEO Conference
3. Monthly General Membership Meetings
4. "MAPping The Future" Column in the Inquirer
5. Industry Briefings
6. Management Development Fora
7. Management Educators' Workshops (MEW)
8. Seminar for Management Educators (SME)
9. Best Environmental Management Practices (BEMP) Program
10. MAP Sustainable Development Program
11. MAP Summit on Sustainable Development
12. MAP-IGES (Institute for Global Environmental Strategies) Recycling Project
13. MAP GREEN Program
14. MAP Scholarship Grants at DLSU, PUP and CLSU
15. Good News! Project
16. Consult MAP Program
17. MAP Code of Ethics
18. MAP CEO Academy
19. MAP Management Orientation and Trade Missions
20. "Best Employers in Asia" Study
21. National Artists Project
22. MAP First Search for Outstanding Indigenous peoples Leadership (S.O.I.L.) Awards
23. MAP "Best Annual Report" Awards
24. The MAP Memo
25. MAP Directory
26. Fellowship Events
27. Assistance to State Universities and Colleges (SUCs)

Board of Governors for 2005

President : SIMON R. PATERNO, Managing Partner,
Credit Suisse First Boston (Hongkong) Ltd., Philippine Branch
Vice President : EVELYN R. SINGSON, *President, eBusiness Services, Inc.*
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NAPOLEON L. NAZARENO, President and CEO, *SMART Communications, Inc.*
PETER L. WALLACE, President, *Wallace Business Forum*

Globe International Services makes visiting the Philippines worry-free

The Philippines' rich culture and abundance of natural wonders draw numerous visitors to the country every year. Globe Handyphone, through its partnership with the Department of Tourism (DOT), helps to give these travelers the best service -- from efficient mobile communication to world-class Pinoy hospitality.

The hotel sector is definitely a vital part of the tourism industry. A hotel's staff needs to be well trained and knowledgeable to effectively deal with their multicultural clientele. Recognizing this, Globe became the sole presentor of the DOT's 52nd International Congress of Le Clefs d'Or, an international association of hotel concierges, on January 22-27, 2005.

Le Clefs d'Or (The Golden Keys) is a worldwide organization of hotel concierges with approximately 3,500 members in 37 countries. It aims to promote excellence and pride in this service-oriented profession. Truly, a concierge can be said to hold the keys to the visitors' enjoyable stay, and thus to advancing tourism in his country.

Themselves purveyors of outstanding customer service, the delegates were treated to the best that the Philippines has to offer. Their experience of Pinoy warmth and congeniality began at the airport, where they were welcomed by bilingual staff at the Meet & Assist booth. Meet & Assist is the flagship program of Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano of the DOT with Globe as the private sector partner. "The people at the booth were all very helpful and friendly. They gave me a lot of useful information," affirms Geoffrey Argue, National Vice President of Le Clefs d'Or Canada and Chief Concierge at the Sutton Place Hotel in Vancouver.

At the conference, more than 250 delegates from over 30 countries exchanged knowledge and insights. The highlight was a series of informative talks on a broad range of topics related to their profession, from the marketing aspect of the hotel industry to security issues like bomb identification and detection.

Mr. Andy Pongco, Le Clefs d'Or's Second Vice President International and Chairman of the Congress' Organizing Committee, cites the 2003 Oakwood mutiny as an example of the critical role that a concierge may be called upon to play as part of his duty. As concierge, he had to oversee the evacuation of guests from the building and ensure their safety. He adds that communication technology also plays a critical role in their profession: "During the said crisis, I used three cellphones and one landline." Having a reliable means of communication enabled him to respond swiftly and appropriately to the security crisis.

Through projects like these, Globe continues to support the DOT's efforts to promote international and domestic tourism, and thus revitalize our nation's economy. In addition, Globe International Services answers the need of foreign travelers for clear and reliable connectivity while exploring the Philippines' breathtaking sights and fascinating culture. With Globe's international roaming services, tourists can avail of affordable and worry-free roaming assistance anytime. For the first-time visitor, useful information is also available from Globe's Traveler's Guide. Simply dial *188 to avail of these services.

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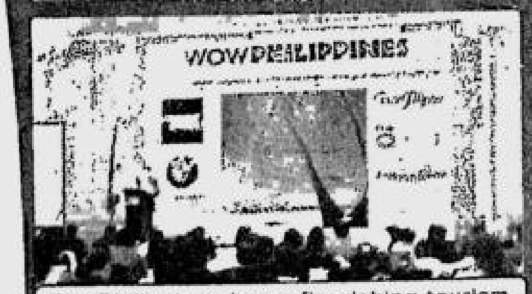
Le Clefs d'Or delegates receive a warm welcome from the staff of the Meet and Assist booth at the airport, a project of the Department of Tourism in partnership with Globe Handyphone.

Some of the newly-arrived delegates with the staff of Globe-DOT's Meet and Assist booth.

Le Clefs d'Or International President Jean-Claude Elgaire with Sen. Richard Gordon (center) and Le Clefs d'Or 2nd VP International Andy Pongco (right).



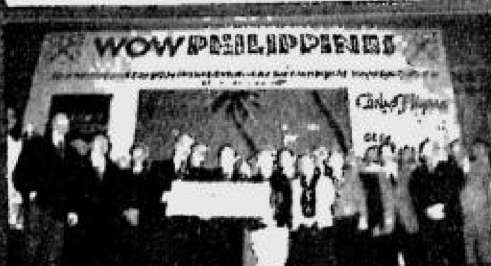
The Philippines has a flourishing tourism industry, and delegates basked in the warmth of world-renowned Filipino hospitality.

Mr. Steven Hicks, VP of Intercontinental AsiaPacific: "The concierge business is all about people serving people."

The Les Clefs d'Or International Vice President welcomes the delegates.

Organizing Committee Chairman Andy Pongco

Mr. Roderick Levejac, chief concierge of the Four Seasons Hotel in Paris: "merci beaucoup" to all Pinoys



Globe Handyphone and the Department of Tourism recognize the valuable contribution of the hotel industry to domestic and international tourism.

Le Clefs d'Or maintains rigorous standards for membership. The organization's insignia, two gold lapel pins shaped like keys, are internationally recognized symbols of excellence in the profession.

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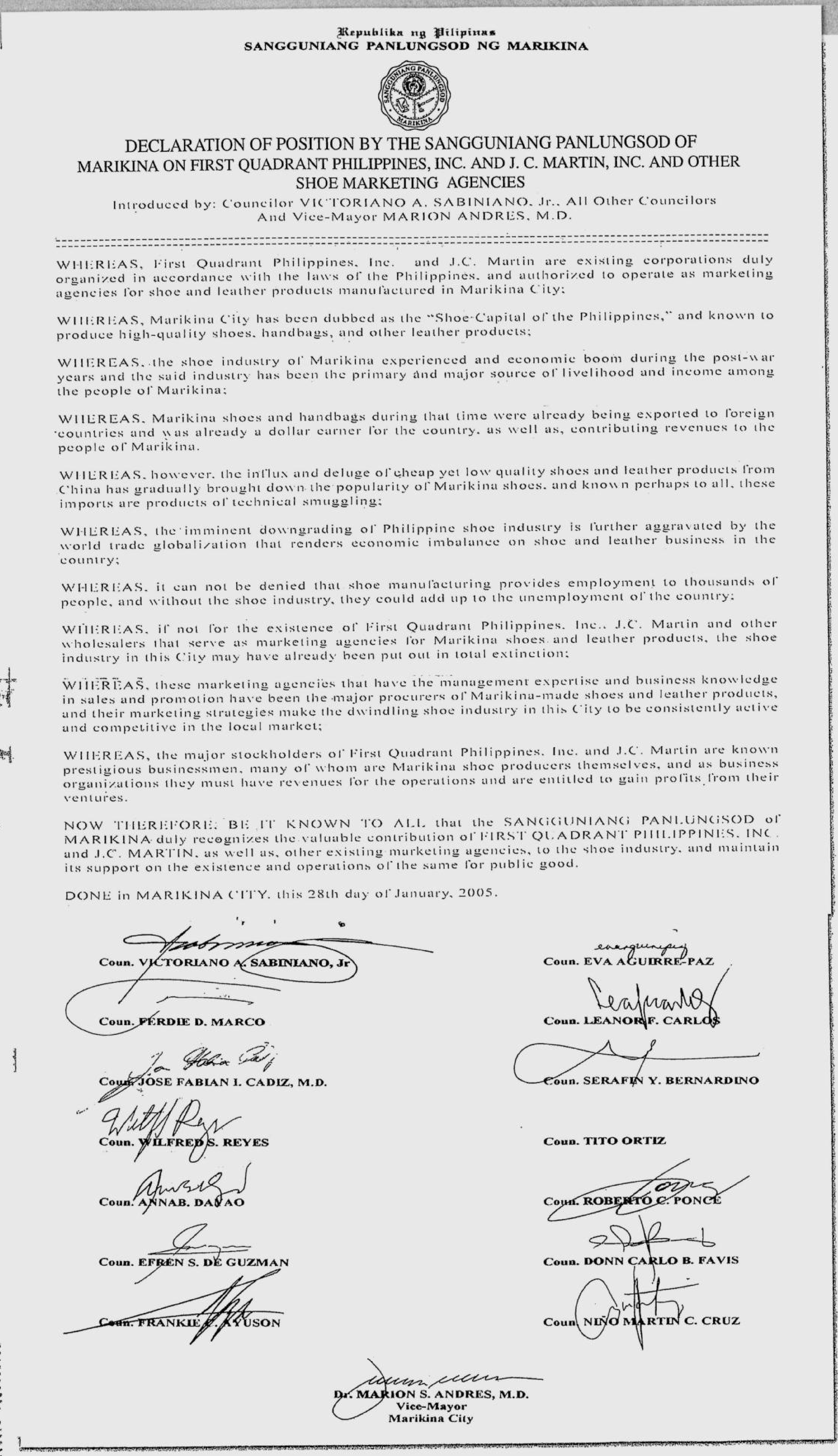
Declaration of Support for First Quadrant Philippines, Inc.



Republika ng Pilipinas
SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD NG MARIKINA

DECLARATION OF POSITION BY THE SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD OF MARIKINA ON FIRST QUADRANT PHILIPPINES, INC. AND J. C. MARTIN, INC. AND OTHER SHOE MARKETING AGENCIES

Introduced by: Councilor VICTORIANO A. SABINIANO, Jr., All Other Councilors
And Vice-Mayor MARION ANDRES, M.D.

WHEREAS, First Quadrant Philippines, Inc. and J.C. Martin are existing corporations duly organized in accordance with the laws of the Philippines, and authorized to operate as marketing agencies for shoe and leather products manufactured in Marikina City;

WHEREAS, Marikina City has been dubbed as the "Shoe-Capital of the Philippines," and known to produce high-quality shoes, handbags, and other leather products;

WHEREAS, the shoe industry of Marikina experienced and economic boom during the post-war years and the said industry has been the primary and major source of livelihood and income among the people of Marikina;

WHEREAS, Marikina shoes and handbags during that time were already being exported to foreign countries and was already a dollar earner for the country, as well as, contributing revenues to the people of Marikina.

WHEREAS, however, the influx and deluge of cheap yet low quality shoes and leather products from China has gradually brought down the popularity of Marikina shoes, and known perhaps to all, these imports are products of technical smuggling;

WHEREAS, the imminent downgrading of Philippine shoe industry is further aggravated by the world trade globalization that renders economic imbalance on shoe and leather business in the country;

WHEREAS, it can not be denied that shoe manufacturing provides employment to thousands of people, and without the shoe industry, they could add up to the unemployment of the country;

WHEREAS, if not for the existence of First Quadrant Philippines, Inc., J.C. Martin and other wholesalers that serve as marketing agencies for Marikina shoes and leather products, the shoe industry in this City may have already been put out in total extinction;

WHEREAS, these marketing agencies that have the management expertise and business knowledge in sales and promotion have been the major procurers of Marikina-made shoes and leather products, and their marketing strategies make the dwindling shoe industry in this City to be consistently active and competitive in the local market;

WHEREAS, the major stockholders of First Quadrant Philippines, Inc. and J.C. Martin are known prestigious businessmen, many of whom are Marikina shoe producers themselves, and as business organizations they must have revenues for the operations and are entitled to gain profits from their ventures.

NOW THEREFORE: BE IT KNOWN TO ALL that the SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD of MARIKINA duly recognizes the valuable contribution of FIRST QUADRANT PHILIPPINES, INC. and J.C. MARTIN, as well as, other existing marketing agencies, to the shoe industry, and maintain its support on the existence and operations of the same for public good.

DONE in MARIKINA CITY, this 28th day of January, 2005.

Coun. VICTORIANO A. SABINIANO, Jr

Coun. EVA AGUIRRE-PAZ

Coun. FERDIE D. MARCO

Coun. LEANOR F. CARLOS

Coun. JOSE FABIAN I. CADIZ, M.D.

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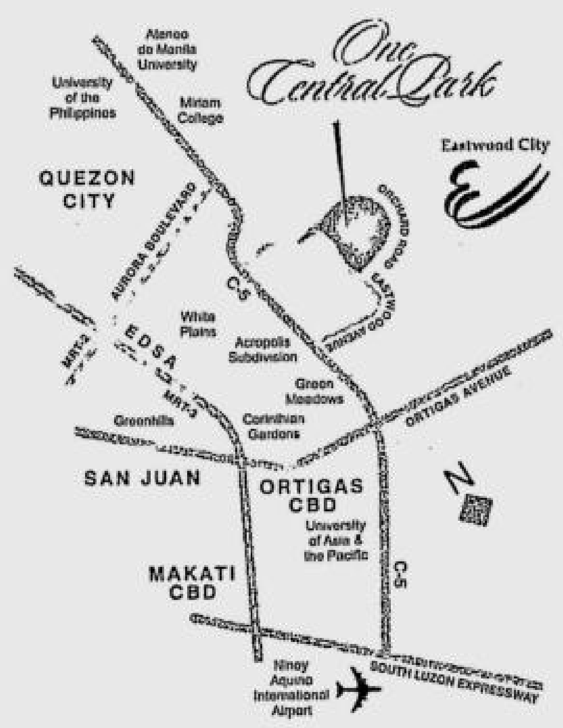
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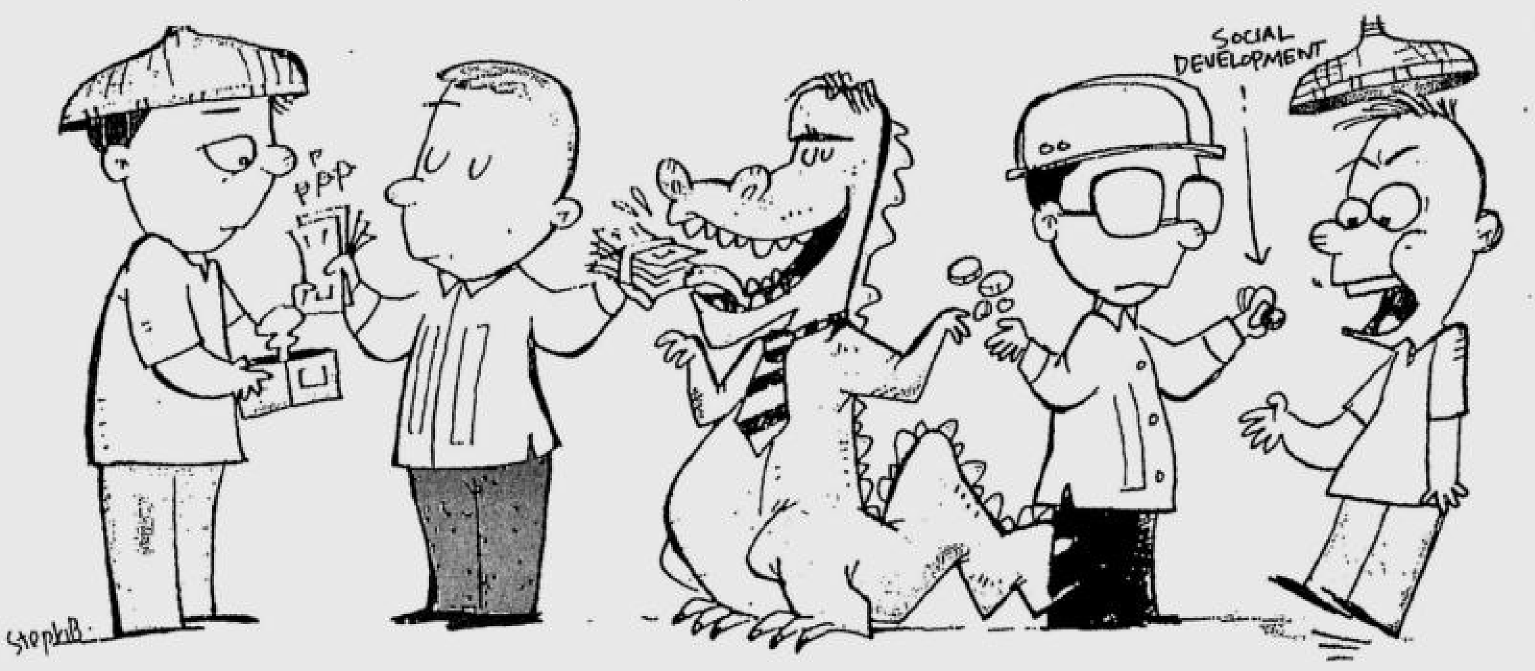
NOT MORAL EDUCATION

To fix fiscal mess, play incentives game

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor



IN ANTI-CORRUPTION drives, many crusaders call for moral education to fix the culture of the bureaucracy. Actually, the more effective way is to play the incentives game. For the mess known as public spending is really a vicious circle of incentives.

Tax evasion, low pay, graft

Tax evasion is rampant in the country, and this leads to little public revenue. A lot of that revenue is also wasted to subsidize government firms that are habitually in the red. Add to that the leakage from debt service. These factors in turn leave little money left for social development needs. The deficient budget and a bloated bureaucracy keep government salaries low.

Because of their meager pay, government employees—from the executives to the clerks - have much incentive to turn corrupt. The mire of corruption leads people to distrust the government. Because of such negative opinions, people have little incentive to pay the correct taxes. They rationalize: why pay at all when a large slice of the tax money will end up with the crooks?

Wasting tax money

The June 1999 Social Weather Stations survey asked the people to choose which of these two statements was closer to their opinion.

1. "Citizens have to pay more taxes to the government if they expect it to improve their services to them" (versus:)

2. "It is useless to pay more taxes to the government because the money will just be wasted or stolen."

Opinion was split, with 48 percent going for the former and 52 percent for the latter. In other words, half felt that additional tax money would just be wasted.

Much of corporate tax evasion can be attributed directly to cheating revenue agents. A dishonest CEO would want to pay less than what is required by the tax laws. He has an incentive to bribe the lowly-paid agent sent to examine his books. Why pay P2 million in taxes when P200,000 can satisfy the agent?

Revenue agencies are key

Because it's a cycle, reform must come in all stages of the loop. Fight tax evasion and raise more revenues. Plug leaks in the budget. Renegotiate debt service, ask for lighter terms. Expose and prosecute the corrupt. Trim the lousy performers from the civil service. Raise the salaries in the public sector.

The revenue bodies are key to the entire circle, so their incentives deserve special attention.

Salaries in the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and the Bureau of Customs (BOC) are low, as are all government paychecks. And yet, enormous amounts of money pass through their halls. The district officers and employees are thus tempted to turn their discretionary power into opportunity. Hence, the incentive structure must be repaired to reward high collections and to punish low collections.

A first attempt was the bill proposing the Internal Revenue Management Authority (IRMA) to replace the BIR. The original IRMA bill intended to weed out the corrupt from the bureau. It refused to give priority hiring to the present BIR staff, and the clause ignited an outcry in the ranks. So legislators watered it down to the NARA bill which reversed the clause.

Rewarding performance

That is, said the bill, BIR personnel should enjoy preferential absorption.

NARA stood for the National Authority for Revenue Administration. The NARA bill offered incentive contracts—salaries would depend on performance. High tax collection would result in high pay for the officials and agents.

The CEO of the new authority would sign a performance contract. For example, collections above X amount would result in pay hikes, while collections below a level Y would lead to pay cuts. A lousy underperforming CEO would end up being fired, just as private executives were. But even the watered down NARA bill was defeated in Congress.

Attrition over time

Welcome news is the fact that the Lateral Attrition Law has just been passed. It sets in place a system of carrots and sticks for the BIR and Customs. Exceeding the revenue target is rewarded, while failure to meet it is punished.

Excess collections go to the Reward and Incentive Fund. If the agencies surpass their targets by 30 percent or below, 15 percent of the excess will be showered on to the employees. The share is higher if the excess is more than 30 percent.

In turn, employees who miss their revenue targets will be fired. Over time, the ranks of the revenue agencies will be thinned by sheer attrition. The reform deserves support: call attention to the biggest wins and losses among the districts.

Comments to darroyo@philonline.com

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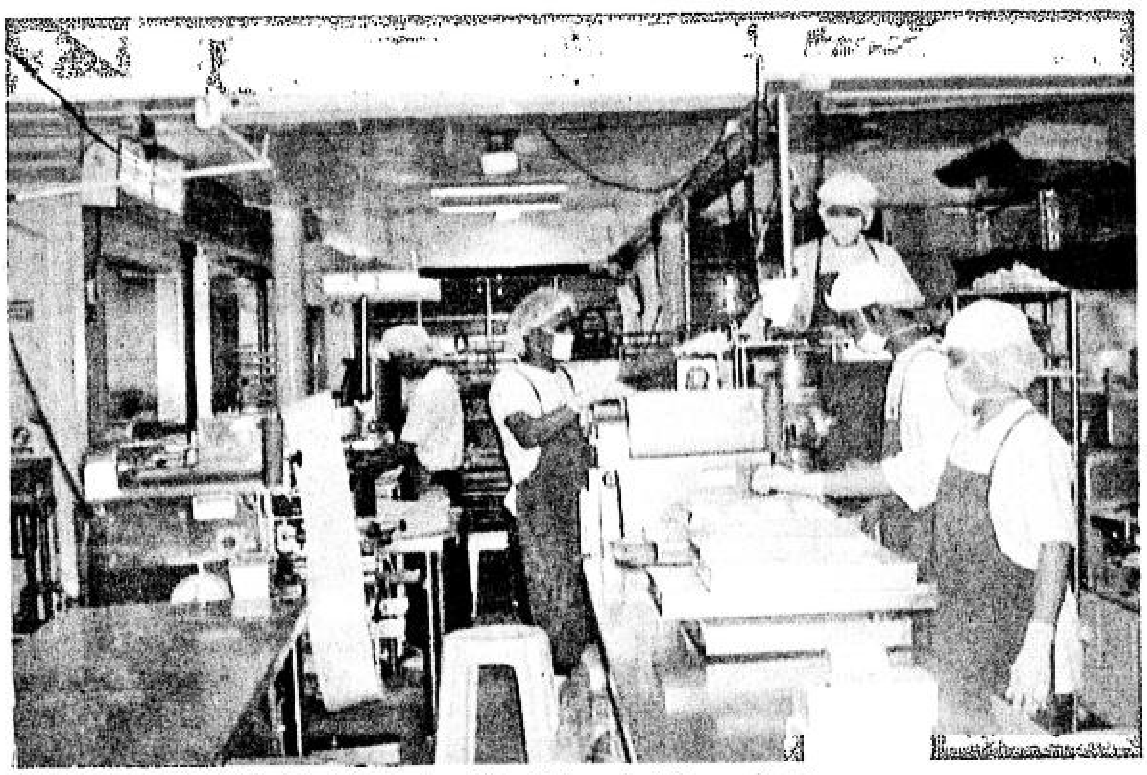
Making service crew PRs, front-line marketers

By Corrie Salientes-Narisma



FROM holes in the walls, Hen Lin now has 110 outlets and a full commissary.

HEN LIN, deemed by many as the dimsum expert in the food service industry, opened its very first store at a time when the country's fast food sector was already booming but was, however, dominated by western burger chains and pizza joints.

Dimsums, at that time, were served *ala carte* in dine-in Chinese restaurants and take-outs of siomai and the likes were still unheard of.

So when Mariano Manas and wife Araceli started offering dimsums, noodles and congee for both dine-in and take-outs in their very first Hen Lin outlet in BF Parañaque in 1983 and, shortly after, in hole-in-the walls in malls, they knew they were deviating from a then prevailing trend and a long-time dining-out habit.

Despite the odds, the couple vowed Hen Lin would always be around. Shortly after the first store opened, Hen Lin dimsum kiosks started sprouting—in the malls and other strategic areas in the metropolis. Dine-in outlets were also put up one after the other. And for 22 years now, the Hen Lin Food chain has, indeed, been very much around.

Not only was Hen Lin able to carve for itself a niche in the market, it was also able to withstand the test of time, the changing tastes and lifestyle of the market, and the economic reversals the country went through.

Success factors

With more than 110 outlets, a big commissary in Sucat, Parañaque, 600 workforce and a very long list of product offerings, the Hen Lin food chain promises to grow even bigger without sacrificing the things that endeared it to the market.

Mariano Manas, president of M&HF Corp. (owner of the Hen Lin Food chain), attributes the growth and staying power of Hen Lin to three things: the quality of the food it serves and the services it provides customers, its sense of fairness, and its ability to adapt to the needs and preference of the market.

"We have been continuously upgrading our products to maintain the quality of the food our customers have come to love, while keeping our prices within their reach," Manas says.

Hen Lin's sense of fairness in conducting its business, he says, is a very important factor that makes it successful.

"We are always fair to everybody. We do not cut corners or short-change the customers. We give our own people what is rightfully theirs and share with them the fruits of our success."

Changing demands

Another key to keeping and growing its market, he says, is to keep on listening to the market—what it wants, what it needs. Through informal surveys done by its staff, Hen Lin is able to find out the changes in the preference of its market.

And as its market demanded, Hen Lin's product offerings grew from the simple line-up of siomai, siopao, congree and noodles, to include a wider array of dimsums—including cuapao, chicken feet, pork spare ribs, party pao—and full meals, including lechon macau, lechon kawali, lumpiang shanghai, barbecue and sweet and sour pork.

It was through these surveys that Hen Lin found out that its customers remained faithful to its Chinese food offerings, but they were becoming uncomfortable with the old set-up of the outlets. It was because of this that Hen Lin dine-in outlets have been undergoing a makeover to provide the ambience that the market has been looking for.

Strategy

Manas is undoubtedly happy with how Hen Lin grew all these years. With the hole-in-the-wall dimsum kiosks fueling its growth, accounting for about 60 percent of the business, Hen Lin did not employ any major advertising and marketing campaign in the past.

It came to be known simply through word-of-mouth marketing.

But Manas is the first to admit this is no longer enough at this time that competition has become much tougher. He says Hen Lin has to take a more aggressive stance to be able to compete.

Thus, Hen Lin advertisements and promotional campaigns have started to become visible these days. But while it does wide-reach campaigns, such as newspaper advertisements, Hen Lin gives equal attention to what it calls "ground level or local store marketing."

This calls for promotional gimmicks tailor-fit to suit the markets of particular local outlets based on locations.

"For instance, set rice meals are promoted in outlets in office districts to cater to the needs of office workers. Other offerings are promoted in certain areas where people take home food for dinner. The good-old dimsums—siomai, siopao and cuapao—will remain the mainstays in the kiosks in the malls whose clientele are the people on the go," he explains.

Further increases in the number of outlets, he says, is being carefully managed to ensure that the quality of food and services will not suffer.

While franchising is still a way to grow, Manas says Hen Lin will be slowing down on this until its commissary is expanded to accommodate substantial increases in demand.

He says the food chain has also adopted tighter criteria in the selection of franchisees not only to make sure that the quality of food and services are kept, but also to ensure the viability of the franchisee.

"For one, we prefer as franchisee someone who owns the place that will be occupied by a Hen Lin outlet. This is to ensure that his earnings will not be eaten up by rental expenses. We want a win-win situation for all of us," he explains.

But more than anything else, the food chain's marketing thrust these days focuses on its people, particularly the service crew, who, Manas says "are Hen Lin's front line marketers and PR people."

Front-liners

"It is these people who will do our local store promotions. They are the ones who are in direct contact with the customers and are in the best position to know what their specific markets want."

To hone its people's skills in marketing, M &HF has been holding a continuing training program for the Hen Lin crew. The program involves crash courses on basis marketing, crisis handling and merchandising.

"They have been undergoing training even before, but those were more on operations. This time, we will try to develop their marketing skills. We are enhancing their skills to make them more effective," Manas says.

Under this program, the crew are given various scenarios, particularly crisis situations like customer complaints, and they are trained, through role-playing and lectures, on how to handle those cases.

Growing further

Armed with this marketing tack, Hen Lin vows to grow further and to serve its customers better. Expansion and diversification into other food service areas may come along the way, Manas says as he lines up plans to put up a fine-dining Chinese restaurant and a Filipino restaurant in Tagaytay, but Hen Lin—the dimsum expert—its kiosks and dine-in outlets will remain around for as long as the market wants it to.

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VAT: A bitter pill that we need to take

MAPPING THE FUTURE

By Edward L. Ferreira

LET ME put my two cents' worth on the ongoing debates on whether increasing the Value Added Tax (VAT) rate is necessary.

The unproductive debates have been centered on whether increasing the VAT rate is anti-poor. As you know, even some business organizations have considered that doing so is really detrimental to the plight of the poor. It will be an additional burden to them and it will further erode their purchasing power.

No matter how you look at it, any additional VAT is really anti-poor. I firmly believe there is no argument about that. That is why even our legislators are thinking of exempting some items from the coverage of the expanded VAT.

However, I think we need to respond to one simple question: Do we need to increase the VAT rate?

My answer is YES. Why? Because our beloved Philippines is in a pathetic fiscal crisis, which I consider a cancer. The increased VAT is like an anti-cancer drug.

There are two kinds of cancer patients: One who wants to be cured and one who will just leave his fate to nature.

A cancer patient who wants to recover and return to normalcy soon will obviously take medication no matter how burdensome. This cancer patient is willing to undergo expensive medication because he wants to regain his good health and start a normal life all over again.

For a cancer patient who would rather not take any medication, and just wait for the call of death, that's his prerogative, and we cannot argue with what he believes in and what he wants to happen to him.

Now, what type of cancer patient is the Philippines? Of course, everybody will say our country is a cancer patient that would like to be even healthier than it was before getting stricken by the dreadful disease.

Let us now go back to the same question: Do we need to increase the VAT rate? Again, my answer is YES, because an increased VAT is a bitter pill that we need to take.

I support the stand of some analysts that among the available options to raise additional revenues to avert a worsening fiscal crisis, increasing the VAT rate is the most tolerable of them all.

To get out of the mess that we are in, we need to look for strategic ways to improve our ability to raise revenues. Further borrowing will do more harm than good. A further downgrade of our international credit rating will be an economic tsunami.

Our poor people should understand that our government is not happy about making them shell out more for products that they need. Increasing the VAT rate now is painful, but the long-term benefits will eventually redound to the benefit of the poor.

If we do not do anything today, things will become even worse. Not doing anything now will push inflation to higher levels, compel our government to resort to more foreign borrowings, and bring more misery to poor Filipinos.

I devoted this piece to the VAT issue to help explain the necessity of increasing our revenues. It is very difficult to do but our economic managers should do more to convince the public that increasing the VAT rate is the best thing to do at this time. This article is my contribution to this purpose.

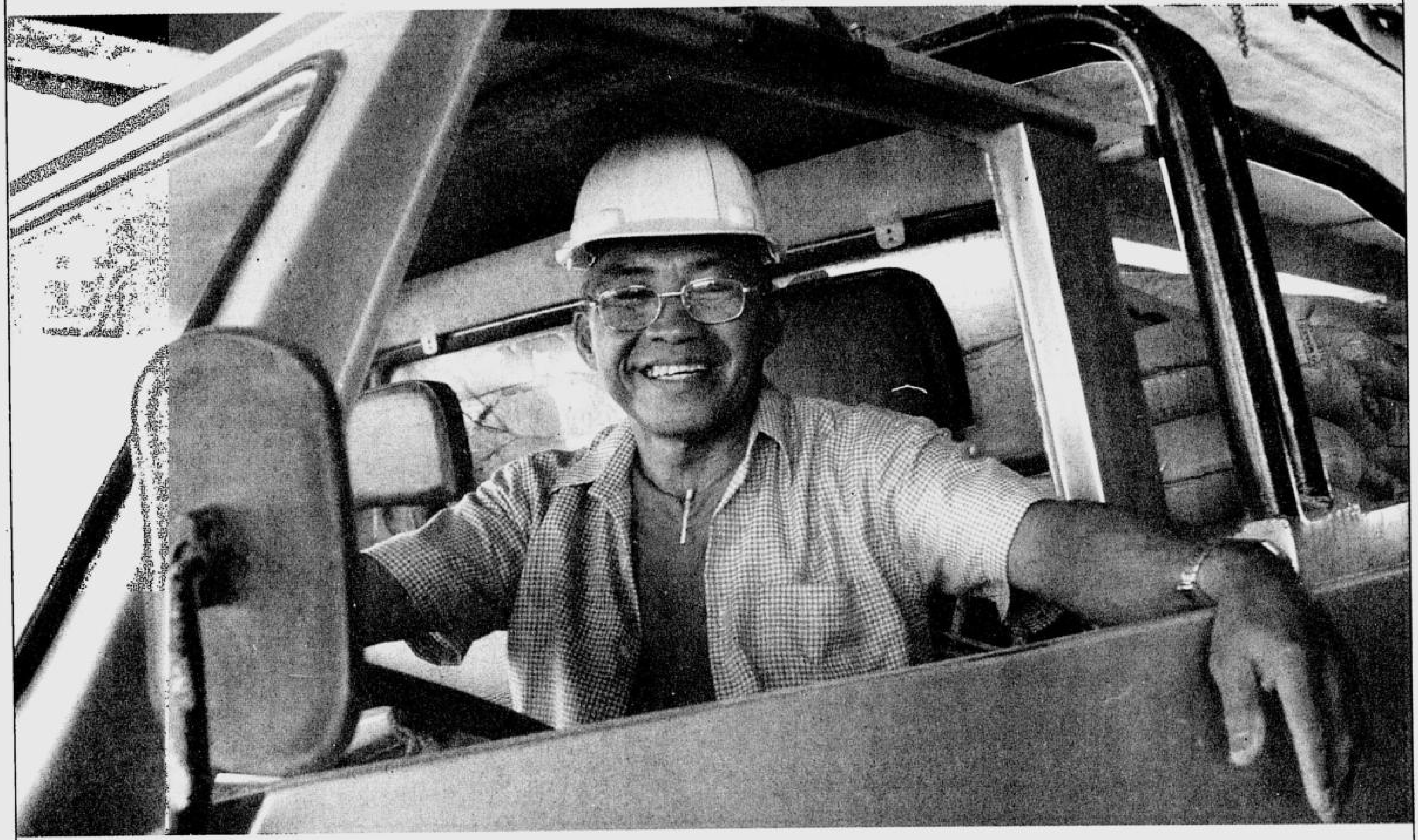
I support the move to increase the VAT rate, but I recommend that our legislators take a look at having multiple VAT rates instead of just having a single rate. This way, the VAT for essential items should be lower than the rates on non-essential and luxurious things.

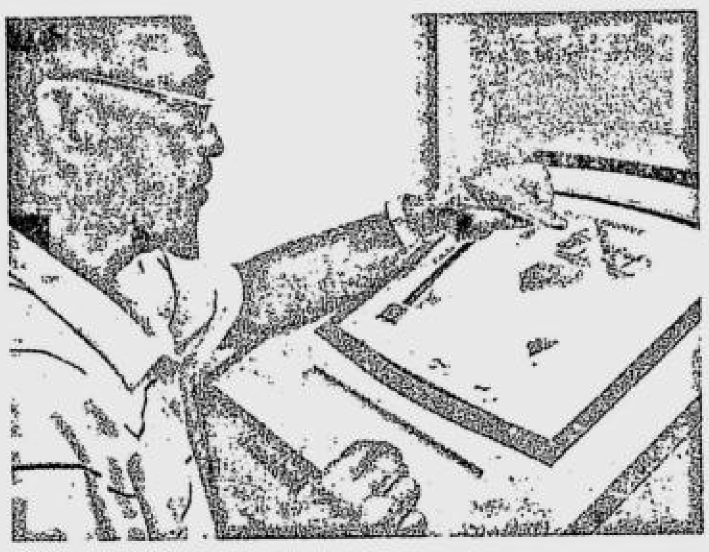
The fiscal crisis is the country's most pressing problem. It will be a gargantuan task to cure this malignant disease.

The Arroyo Administration needs all the cooperation that it can get from all sectors of society in order to develop a fiscally stronger government that can attract more foreign direct investments to generate more employment opportunities for the poor.

Are you now ready to take the bitter pill?

(The author is consul-general a.h. for the Philippines of the Republic of Kazakhstan, president and CEO of Ferycor International Management Group Inc., national president of Philippine Movement for Good Governance or PHILMO...GOIGO! Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)





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Real estate developer to go into 24-hour shops

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE STA. Lucia Property Management Inc. (SLPMI), the property management unit of property developer Sta. Lucia Realty and Development Inc., is venturing into the convenience store (c-store) business with the opening of its first 20/20 Minimart in March this year in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

"We will be the first one to put up an all-day convenience store on that major thoroughfare. We conducted a study on the volume of traffic in the area and we are convinced that we have the right location where we can do brisk business," says Tom B. Clemente III, president and chief executive officer of SLPMI.

The P5-million 20/20 Minimart will be the first c-store store along the high-density Salitran Road that links directly to another major road network, the Daang Hari Road in Cavite.

Clemente says the company's foray into the c-store business was the brainchild of Vicente R. Santos, executive vice president of Sta. Lucia Realty and chairman of SLPMI.

Santos, who also operates three photo shops at the Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall in Cainta, Rizal, collaborated with Clemente in conceptualizing the 20/20 Minimart.

"We agreed that our first location has bright prospects because of the high vehicle and foot traffic. Santos has very sound ideas on the retail business. We both want to take advantage of emerging opportunities in the market while I am also quite familiar with the market in Dasmariñas," Clemente shares.

A study by the University of Asia and the Pacific show that existing players in the c-store business expect the industry to further flourish in the medium-term, primarily because the country is not yet saturated with c-stores, particularly in Luzon.

SLPMI is quick to spot such opportunities. Clemente says Sta. Lucia is envisioning the 20/20 Minimart to be a popular destination in the Dasmariñas area, which hosts a number of new mid-range and emerging upscale residential communities.

"We will cater primarily to nearby communities and transient people and offer them round-the-clock convenience, especially for those who reside in the area but work in Metro Manila or in nearby economic and growth zones. Our c-store will appeal to the faster-paced lifestyles among working people in urban areas who need to make shopping trips any time of the day," says Clemente.

Currently, the company's engineers and interior designers are refining the store layout to get the right overall look and "feel" of the c-store.

"Our store will be simple but will still have that feeling of class, without being too intimidating because we want to appeal to all customers," explains Clemente.

The store's façade will have attractive and visually appealing colors of lime, green and yellow.

The store's features, according to Clemente, will reflect the company's vision to be able to quickly respond to the needs of customers by offering superior products and services.

Aside from offering fast-selling food and beverage items such as snack foods, bakery products, sandwiches, pizza, dimsum, dairy products and soft drinks, 20/20 Minimart will also include a café where customers could take time to just enjoy and relax.

Other attractions include retail and service outlets such as a major ATM network, a pick-up laundry service, and a lotto outlet. Clemente says more 20/20 Minimarts will be launched in key or strategic locations in Luzon this year, depending on market demand.

"We intend to stay in the convenience store business for the long haul, but we're proceeding with caution. Right now, our immediate goal is to make the 20/20 Minimarts recognizable and visible."

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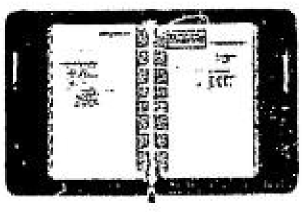

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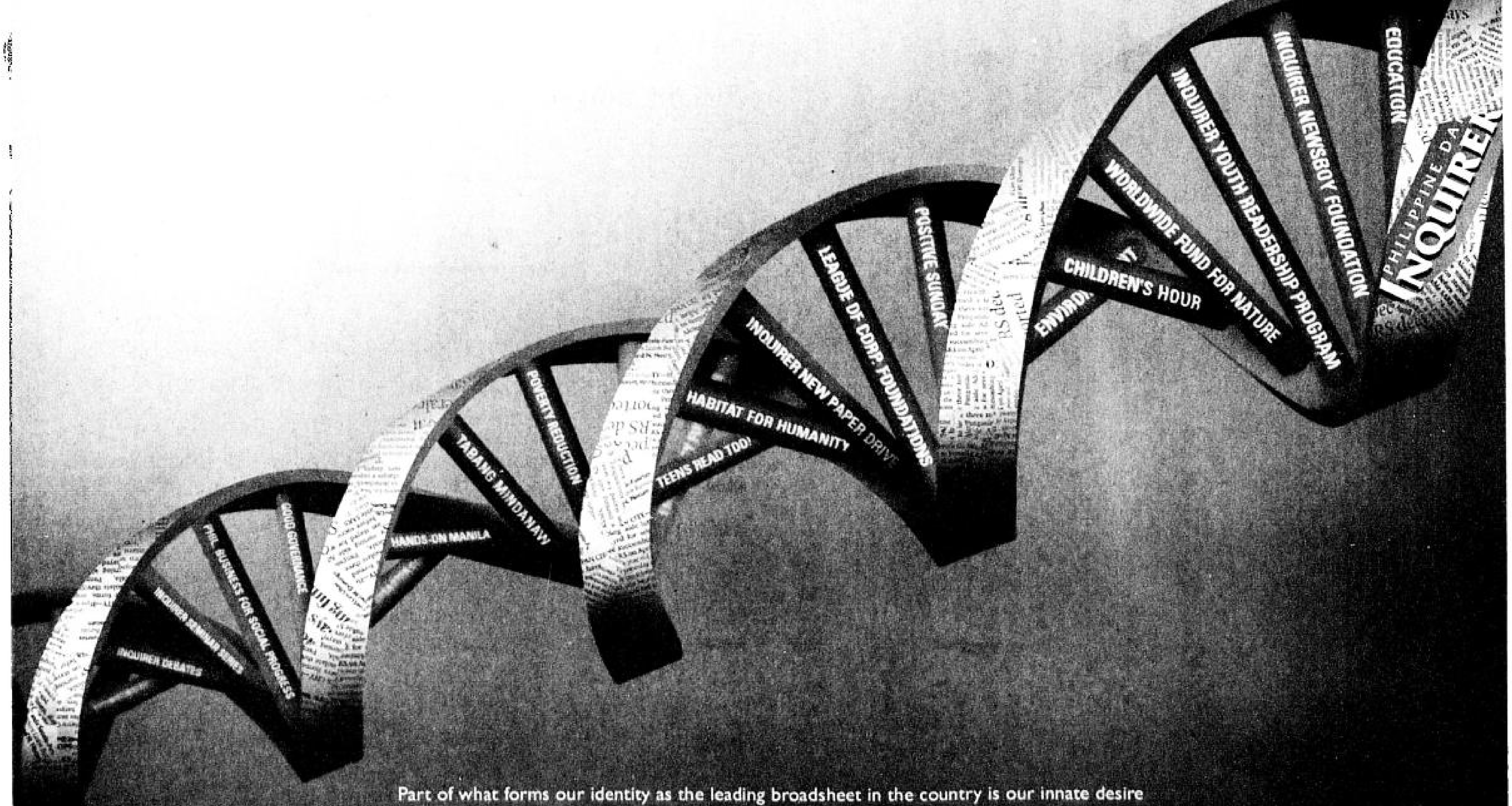

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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MOVEMENTS

HSBC appoints new marketing head

NANOO

HSBC recently announced the appointment of Suresh Nanoo as senior vice president marketing financial services. Nanoo will lead a growing marketing and product development team covering a range of personal financial services including credit cards, wealth management, personal loans and consumer finance. He will also be responsible for the bank's branding initiatives across both the consumer and commercial banking arms.

Nanoo started as an engineer but pursued a banking career when he joined HSBC Malaysia in 1982. Over an initial span of 12 years with the bank, he covered the various areas of consumer and commercial banking. He then joined Visa International in Singapore as regional brand director and managed brand and marketing programs for Visa across Asia Pacific. He returned to Malaysia in 2002 and prior to joining HSBC in the Philippines, Nanoo was senior general manager of group marketing for Malaysia's AmBank Group.

7-Eleven appoints new president

PATERNO

JAMES Hsieh, vice chairman of Philippine Seven Corp., the operator of the 7-Eleven chain of convenience stores, recently announced the appointment of Jose Victor Paterno as president effective Jan. 1, 2005. Also appointed were Sam C.P. Liu as vice president and Michael Zalamea as independent director.

Victor Paterno, 37, joined the company in 1996. He was chief executive officer of Philippine Seven's logistics subsidiary Convenience Distribution Inc. before his appointment as president. Paterno earned his degree in mechanical engineering at Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA, USA, and was part of Nestle USA's manufacturing management training program. He held various positions at the company's Freehold, New Jersey coffee manufacturing plant from 1990 to 1993.

Sam Liu, 36, has been Philippine Seven's marketing director since 2001 and has overseen a number of the company's important marketing initiatives. Seconded from 7-Eleven Taiwan, Liu is a graduate of Tam Kang University in Taipei and earned his MBA from the Ateneo de Manila University.

Michael Zalamea, 39, was nominated by parent company, President Chain Store Corp. of Taiwan. Zalamea is currently a director of Philippine Coastal Storage and Pipeline Corp., Clark Pipeline and Depot Co. Inc. and Wespac Holdings.

UPS appoints new head for RP

UPS has announced the appointment of Gillian Sim as the new managing director of UPS' Philippine operations.

Gillian brings with her 11 years of experience and expertise in the UPS business and extensive knowledge in the transportation and warehousing industry.

"We are very excited about the appointment of Gillian as the new managing director of UPS Philippines. The Philippine operation is very vital to UPS in the Asia Pacific region because of the intra-Asia hub. With her expertise in the business, we are confident that Gillian will bring dynamism to the UPS Philippine team," said Ken Torok, president of UPS Asia Pacific.

As the managing director of UPS Philippines, Gillian will oversee both the UPS joint venture operations and the intra-Asia hub in Clark, Pampanga.

Sagittarius Mines names new president

DOMINGUEZ

SAGITTARIUS Mines Inc. appointed Paul Dominguez as president and chief executive officer effective Feb. 1, 2005. Dominguez, who is a director of Alsons Corp., has had a distinguished career in both the private and public sectors. Dominguez was president of C. Alcantara and Sons Inc., a major manufacturer of construction products based in Mindanao, before he joined the administration of former President Fidel V. Ramos as presidential assistant for Mindanao and chair of the Mindanao Economic Development Council. He was also presidential adviser for regional development in the Cabinet of President Macapagal-Arroyo and served as special envoy to Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia.

Sagitarrius Mines Inc. is principally involved in the exploration and development of the Tampakan Copper-Gold Project in the municipalities of Tampakan in South Cotabato, Columbio in Sultan Kudarat and Kiblawan in Davao del Sur. The Alcantara Group is a partner in the consortium for the Tampakan Project, which has a financial and technical assistance (FTAA) with the Philippine government.

Dominguez takes over the position of president and CEO of Sagittarius Mines Inc. at the commencement of the project's pre-feasibility phase.

RP firm bags Nokia, Australian awards

A MOBILE phone-based business solution for a global insurance firm and a keypad game set to music and played on cellular phones are among the applications that are putting the spotlight on the Philippines in the mobile domain worldwide. More specifically, both solutions have been featured by Nokia in its product catalogues of winning solutions and services from developer companies all over the globe.

eScience, a systems developer based in the Philippines, created both applications. Its mobile phone-based product, which boosted sales for a European insurance firm by providing on-the-spot computations and feedback, topped other regional entries in the productivity/business applications category in the 2004 Nokia Forum PRO Award. In 2003, eScience was also a regional winner in the Nokia Series 60 Challenge in the consumer category for Thumbeat. The game features an animated character dancing to a beat as the player keeps pace through appropriate keypad strokes.

Last year, eScience also won second place in the Secrets of Australia IT Innovation for its Mobile Karaoke Product. The karaoke for cellular phones makes use of a MIDI file to supply the accompanying music. Lyrics flash onscreen and are highlighted so the user can concertize wherever his mobile may take him.

The five-year-old eScience is considered a granddad in the frenetic wireless arena where the shelf-life of winning products is limited to a few months. Says Richard Dagelet, its president, "Mere survival in the wireless domain means coming up with a steady stream of applications. Staying ahead demands that you always know where the market is going and predict its preferences each time."

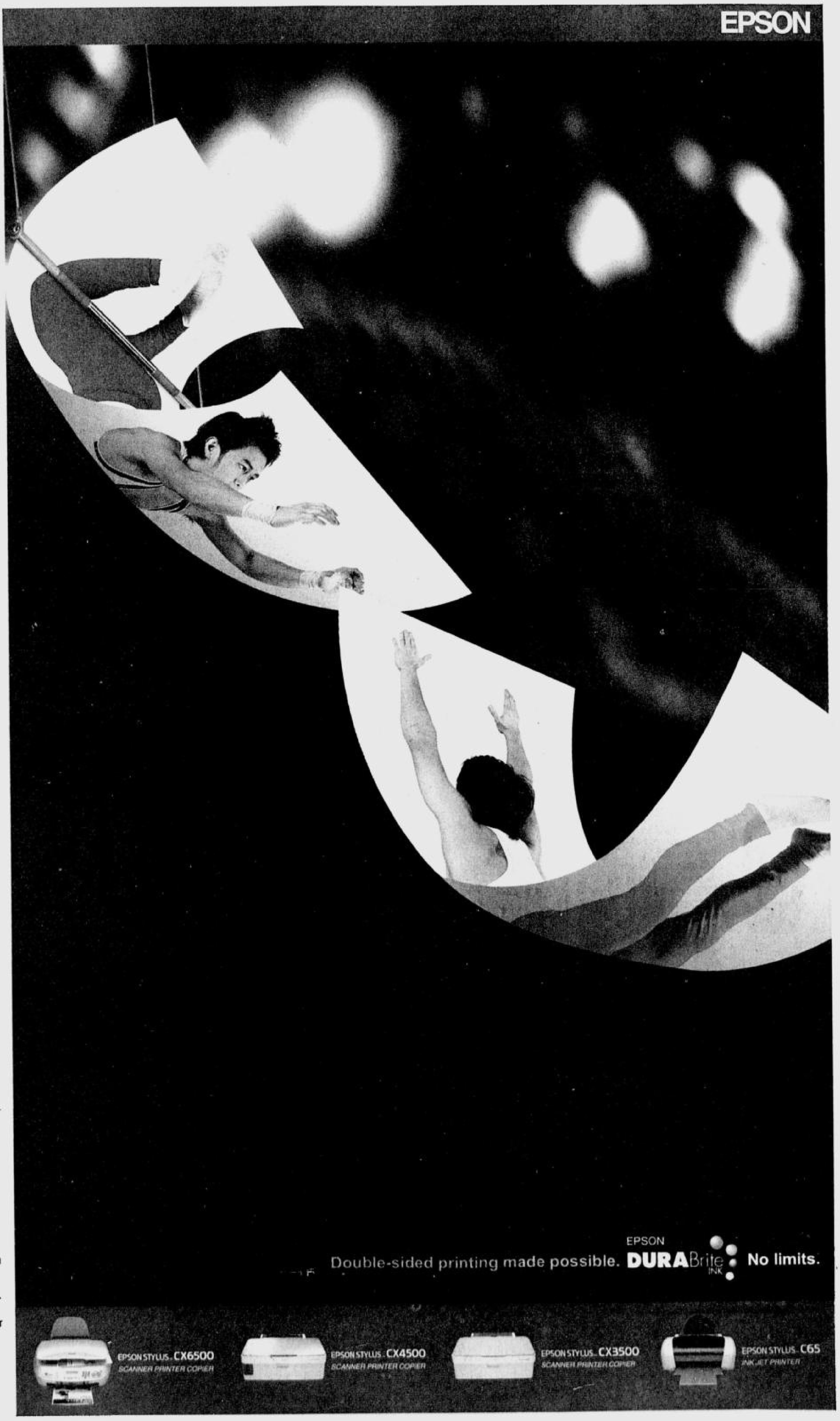
Dagelet observes that Philippine developers are well positioned to come up with cutting-edge mobile technologies. He observes that in the US and Australia from where eScience markets itself regionally, the cellular phone is used primarily to make calls. In the Philippines, data as opposed to voice accounts for over 30 percent of total revenues of the dominant operators. In Norway and Germany, the percentage of the business devoted to data is well below 20.

Filipinos use their mobiles for business as well as for entertainment—not just voice. For their part, Philippine operators indulge the market by making available the latest phones while stimulating developers of applications to constantly innovate by investing in sophisticated equipment. Notes Dagelet: "We are set up in the Philippines and Australia to provide the world with wireless innovations."

An indication of its keen knowledge of the market, eScience was recently appointed by American software developer Macromedia to distribute Mobile Flash Lite in the Philippines. Flash is carried by 98 percent of all Internet-connected computers.

eScience has also provided the government with a solution aimed at curbing what once was a rampant form of corruption. In response to a sleuth of cases involving the diversion of tax payments, the company devised a system for the Bureau of Internal Revenue to acknowledge payments from the top 1,000 corporations. Through a sponsorship from the Bankers Association of the Philippines, eScience developed in 2003 a system that would allow paying corporations to simply receive confirmation via a text message that their payment had been officially noted by the agency. These days, cases of tax diversion have practically been eradicated.

Dagelet remarks that eScience's performance in Australia could lead to greater appreciation in the world market for Philippine talent. The company competed against 200 other developers including American and German firms aside from Australian companies. Only a tenth received citations. "We definitely proved that Filipinos have the creativity and skills to deliver innovative products," Dagelet says.



Egg still stand out for their healthy properties

WITH several misconceptions (primarily on their rich cholesterol content), recent studies have proven that all the elements inherent in eggs far outweigh such fallacies.

For one, eggs are reasonably priced food sources that contain elements essential for body growth and development, particularly high-quality protein, vitamins A, B2, D and E and niacin, as well as the minerals copper, iron , sulphur, phosporus and unsaturated fatty acids, among many others. The high quality protein contained in eggs is an excellent aid for growing children, as they help balance the input and output of calories, while the importance of breakfast for good performance at school has also been demonstrated. Feeding egg yolks at six months of age provides a valuable source of iron for infants, while teenage girls who regularly eat eggs are less likely to develop breast cancer later in life.

Not to be outdone, the high protein in eggs can do their job in helping people lose weight maintenance as they are low in calories, nutrient-dense and create the feeling of being satiated, thus enabling people to "lose less muscle and more fat".

More than just an all-round food product that helps boost energy, eggs according to a report from US Egg Nutrition Centre, equally poses medicinal properties to aid even those with a wide array of health problems. For one, the three substances contained in eggs-lumiflavin, lumchrome and sulphorophane-act as antioxidants, as these are capable of helping combat cancer-inducing viruses and prevent normal cells from turning into cancerous ones. The proliferation of the so-called specialty eggs have also been a boon to health, as these take pride in containing omega-3 fatty acids (to reduce hypertension), organic chromium (to minimize the risks of LDL cholesterol and blood sugar levels, as it improves insulin production), and vitamin E, organic selenium and other antioxidants that prevent oxidation, aging, formation of plaques in arteries, atherosclerosis and cardiovascular disease.

Another good news that, indeed, can boost the image of eggs as a safe, socially accepted product for vegetarians, is that the Indian systems of medicine (Ayuvedic and Siddhic) recognize eggs for their amazing healing properties, dating back thousands of years. When mixed with herbs, eggs do wonders in healing burns and fractures quickly.

Indeed, the health benefits of eggs are something to be rediscovered for those who want to better know this food product. There is also a free seminar presented by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute, National Nutrition Council that is one of the major highlights of the 4th Philippine Egg Show slated from Feb. 11 to 13 at the Megatrade Hall 2, SM Megamall Ortigas Center. Robina Farms and Bounty Farms will also offer seminars on lighting programs in layer management and successful brooding management, respectively.

Revolving around the theme "Love That Egg", the 4th Philippine Egg Show will showcase activities designed to enhance appreciation of health, economic and even artistic wonders of eggs, like an egg-painting contest, egg cooking lessons, egg feeding, an egg photo contest, egg Olympics, "Eggstra Challenge", a puppet show and a mall parade, free chicks and free eggs will be given away.

New anti-dandruff shampoo shows better results

YOUR hair is your crowning glory. Having healthy tresses does not solely mean you have shiny and manageable hair, but a dandruff-free scalp.

The problem is, not all of us are born with a healthy scalp. A lot of us have to deal with a chronic itchy condition of the scalp called dandruff.

Dandruff, one of the most common dermatological diseases, affects at least 50 percent of the world's population at any given time. It is usually accompanied by excessive flaking or shedding of the scalp's skin, causing not just discomfort but also embarrassment to those afflicted with this condition.

Believed to be caused by an overgrowth of the fungus Pityrosporum ovale, which is commonly found on the skin and scalp, common factors like climate, excessively oily skin, hormone production, dietary influences, and stress are all acknowledged to contribute to the development of dandruff.

Treating dandruff is difficult, but controlling the fungus that causes the disease is possible.

Stieprox shampoo, an anti-dandruff shampoo that has recently been introduced in the market, has been proven to effectively control P. ovale. Stieprox contains ciclopirox olamine, an antifungal agent that has previously been shown to be effective in treating different dermatological problems like jock itch, athlete's foot, and ringworm.

A study conducted at Seoul National University in South Korea showed that dandruff shampoo containing 1.5 percent ciclopirox olamine is effective in treating mild to moderate dandruff.

The study compared the effect of ciclopirox olamine to that of ketoconazole among 64 Koreans experiencing mild to moderate dandruff. Results showed that both compounds caused a progressive and rapid decline in dandruff severity. Both compounds were also observed to prevent the recurrence of dandruff during the post treatment period.

One difference, though, that was observed in the study was that ciclopirox olamine shampoo has a higher cosmetic acceptability compared to its competitor. Study participants reported that Stieprox did not cause hair dryness, unpleasant odor and discomfort, and that it does not alter treated (permed and dyed) hair, thus, providing the more trendy patients an improved option for dandruff treatment.

Ciclopirox olamine shampoo is manufactured by Stiefel Philippines Inc under the brand name Stieprox. It is available in Mercury Drugstore outlets nationwide.

To know more about dandruff and Stieprox, visit your dermatologist or call Stiefel Philippines Inc hotline at 1-800-10-STIEFEL (provincial) and 635-7346 (Metro Manila, 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Mondays to Fridays. E-mail action-aid.ph@stiefel.com.

NORTHERN PALAWAN CRUISE

DISCOVERY Cruises Philippines offers a 4-day/3-night cruise on board the 80-footer luxury M/V Lagoon Explorer, marking its return to northern Palawan. The newly renovated 10-cabin catamaran cruise ship goes around Calamian Bay, Northern Palawan, with twice weekly departures from Coron, Palawan, every Monday and Thursdays until May. Owned and operated by Blue Horizon, in cooperation with Club Paradise, the itinerary includes Manila-Busuanga-Manila airline ticket/jeepney ride to Coron, where the M/V Lagoon Explorer awaits the passengers to board. From here, the cruise will introduce its passengers to many small, unknown islands with white sand beaches, and waters teeming with endless varieties of tropical fishes, amazing rock formations, and visits to friendly villages. On board the M/V Lagoon Explorer, there is friendly and efficient service worthy of any first-class hotel. For particulars, call Club Paradise at 838-4956 to 60.

GlobeQuest gives 'High Five' to clients

GLOBEQUEST, Globe Telecom's wireline business, continues to delight its customers in creating relevant solutions for corporate customers based on ubiquitous, value-priced, high-speed data services over a nationwide broadband network.

Last month, GlobeQuest threw a party for its satisfied clients at the Rizal Ballroom of Shangri-La Hotel in Makati. Dubbed as "High Five", the event was a celebration of five decades of songs and dances from the '60s to the present.

Setting the mood was the welcoming of guests by no less than Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Presley impersonated. Sixties hits filled the room, while guests dressed in their best costumes registered. Clients were treated to a buffet that lasted throughout the evening. Former VJ and model Bianca Valerio and Francis Ricafort hosted the affair.

After Gil Genio, CEO of Innove Communications, delivered his welcome remarks, a medley of song and dances followed the program, wherein Dance Sport showcased dances of the sixties like waltz, tango, cha-cha, samba, rhumba, and other ballroom dances. For the seventies experience, impersonators of Diana Ross and Tina Turner took centerstage. A special number depicting the '80s era was GlobeQuest's very own "Hagibis" in their rendition of "Katawan", where corporate business group head Boboy Romero played as one of the gigolos with the participation of Phoemela Baranda. DJ Boyet Almazan also played hits from the '80s that transported guests back to the era. Lastly, for the '90s, GlobeQuest sales head Aries Sayson performed Kool & the Gang hits with the Aliw Awardee showband Makemusic.com. Impersonators of J Lo and Kylie Minogue were also in the house to provide entertainment.

TV personality Phoemela Baranda partied with the guests, including representatives from People Support, Dole Asia, Bank of the Philippine Islands, Philippine Airlines, McDonald's, PRA, WG&A, and Amcham, among others. Phoemela was also on hand in the raffling off of prizes. A CD compilation of hits from the '70s was given out to each guest as a souvenir.

GlobeQuest has a reason to celebrate the commencement of 2004 with the following achievements: launching of Broadband Acess Services last March, GlobeQuest as first to provide Cebu with a direct connection to international cable facilities, introduction of Net Drive last May 6, the unwiring of Waterfront Cebu Hotel being the country's 1st wi-fi hotspot hotel last July, the offering of Remote View, launching of the GlobeQuest Store Express last July, and the launching of Marco Polo Davao as the first Broadband Internet Zone (BIZ) hotel in Mindanao.

FROM left: Gil Genio, Innove CEO; Gerry Ablaza, Globe Telecom CEO; Boboy Romero, GlobeQuest head; Noel Tagaza, BPI CIO; Chito Dychico, BPI AVP.

FROM left: Gerry Ablaza, Globe CEO; Don Felbaum, AmCham ICT committee; Dan Reyes, director and country manager, Client Logic; Grace Castillo, head, GlobeQuest marketing.

Bits Clips

New Splash International COO

PATRON

SPLASH Holdings Inc announces the appointment of Edgardo I. Patron as chief operating officer of its subsidiary Splash International Inc. Patron will implement the strategic leadership and management system of the organization to effectively achieve its various business goals, particularly the intensification of Splash's business initiatives in countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand and the Middle East. Prior to joining Splash, he was general manager of Kraft Foods International in Thailand and IndoChina, and was responsible for accelerating the growth of Kraft's businesses in the Southeast Asian region. He also held key positions at San Miguel Corp in its various offices in the Philippines and in Asia.

Win Samsung MP3 player

GROOVE to your favorite tunes on the go as Citibank, the industry innovator in card products and services, gives newly approved bank cardholders the chance to own the world's smallest MP3 player-the Samsung YP-T5 via the Citibank Clear Card with Visa Mini promo. Simply apply for a Citibank Clear Card with Visa Mini, and when approved until Jan. 31, you could walk away with one of 10 Samsung MP3 players being given away. You also enjoy instant freebies like waived monthly membership fees for a year worth P1,080 and a free clear card case that you can personalize with your photos. Call 423-3000, or log on to www.citibank.com.ph for more details.

Maldita sale

CALLING all Malditas and fashionistas! From Jan. 1 until today, avail yourselves of most sought-after items at near bargain prices from Maldita, the power-dressing women's favorite fashion source. Take advantage of the whopping 10 to 80-percent discount on a wide range of trendy apparel, shoes and accessories that can turn you from a walking wallpaper to fabulous star. From head to toe, find your perfect fashion statement from Maldita's racks of glamour. Visit any of the Maldita stores at SM North Edsa, SM Megamall, SM Manila, SM Sucat, SM Fairview, SM Southmall, SM Dasmariñas, Cavite, SM Cebu City, SM San Fernando, Pampanga, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place Ermita, Glorietta 1, Ayala Center, Festival Mall, Alabang, Outlet Yard, Quezon Avenue, and Marketl Marketl, Bonifacio Global City.

Yuchengco policy confab

THE FISCAL crisis faced by the national government has spawned several major concerns, including human security and social protection-the focus of the Second Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco Policy Conference held today, Jan. 31 at the Multi-Purpose Room of the Don Enrique T. Yuchengco Building in the De La Salle University main campus. Difficulties resulting from the rapidly increasing national debt and correspondingly decreasing investments in human resources and capital outlay will be discussed. DSWD Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman will give the keynote address in the event, which will highlight five major presentations. Ambassador Yuchengco and the Yuchengco Center see the need to provide a forum for dialogue and policy debates aimed at strengthening the policy basis of social safety nets and social protection for human security.

MCS calls grads

THE MALATE Catholic School (MCS) and its Alumni Association (MCSAA) are inviting all graduates to celebrate the school's 88th foundation anniversary. An Alumni Week is scheduled from Jan. 31 to Feb. 4, to be capped by a Grand Alumni Homecoming Night on Feb. 5. Graduates from different batches celebrating milestone years-graduates of 1955 (Golden Jubilarians-50th), 1960, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980 (Silver Jubilarians-25th), 1985, 1990-are specially invited to join in the organization and planning of the events. Of course, all other years' graduates are most welcome to join the fun of the preparations. The inaugural ceremony will be on Jan. 31 at 4 p.m. (MCS Boys Campus), which will also be the formal opening of the Art and Visual Arts Exhibit. A whole-day Badminton Tournament follows on Feb. 1 to be held at Intramuros Badminton Center (behind San Agustin Church). On Feb. 3, the students of MCS will stage a "Malatean Day" showcasing the school's history and its many talents. A Grand Reunion Night will highlight the weeklong celebration on Feb. 5 (Saturday). An Intrams motif will welcome guests beginning 2 p.m. at the Jaime Cardinal Gymnasium (across MCS Boys Department), and a '60s to '80s theme party will follow in the evening. Call MCSAA office (Grace or Tony) at telefax 521-1451 or text 0916-3165692; secretariat care of Nina Serrano (0917-8910457) and Muji Tong (0917-8468362). Visit www.mcsaaf.org for more information.

Gold Quill Awards

THE COUNTRY'S best PR and communication programs are vying for the annual Gold Quill Philippines Awards, where the deadline for entries has been set for Jan. 31. Gold Quill is the new standard for excellence in communication management and communication skills. Now on its third year, the Gold Quill committee will announce the winners chosen by an independent panel of senior communication executives during the awards night at the new Ayala Museum on March 4. Sponsored by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Philippines, the Gold Quill is the local counterpart of the same awards given out to global entries during the world IABC Conference to be held this June in Washington DC. Entry forms and other inquiries will be handled by the IABC Secretariat care of Art, Sonny or Dominic at 892-9592 or through e-mail info@iabc.com.ph. Entry forms may also be downloaded from www.iabc.com.ph.

PSHS System meeting

THERE will be an organizational meeting and election of the board of trustees of the Philippine Science High School System National Alumni Association on Feb. 5 at 9 a.m. at the ASTB, PSHS Diliman, Quezon City.

Think big, start small

A LEADER'S WAY
John C. Maxwell

THE FIRST leadership conference I ever did was quite memorable-not because it was such a resounding success, but because it was so pitiful.

I spent a week in Kansas City teaching leadership to a crowd of 17 people. Yes, you read that right. Seventeen people! Those poor folks didn't know what they were getting into—they sat there and listened to me from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. for five straight days.

By the last day, I'm sure they hadn't learned a thing; they were just silently begging for me to stop so they could go home!

That was more than 20 years ago. At the time, I had no way of knowing that I would eventually start my own leadership company and write numerous books about the subject. In fact, the only thing I knew for sure before the conference started was that I was going to lose $3,000 if I didn't cancel it for lack of participation.

But I wanted to teach leadership, and I knew I had to start somewhere. So I went for it.

When contemplating the pursuit of a dream or the start of a new venture, too many people are hesitant to begin because they can't comprehend the entire journey. If that's where you find yourself right now, don't expect to understand what it takes to get to the top. Just take the next step. There's no shame in starting small; in fact, if you don't start small, you'll probably never start at all.

Why else should you start small? Here are three reasons:

1. It encourages you to get started.

Accomplishing a small step helps provide the motivation you need to achieve the next step. Have you ever put off starting a project-revising your company's employee handbook, developing a new marketing plan, reworking your resume, learning a new computer program, or cleaning out your garage-because it was just too overwhelming? You know it needs to be done, but you keep thinking, "It's too big and it's never going to happen!" With that mindset, you're right-it won't happen. But if you break the project down into small pieces and tackle one at a time, the whole thing suddenly becomes much less daunting and much more doable.

2. It allows you to prioritize and concentrate.

Mother Teresa once said, "If you can't feed a thousand, then feed one." That is profound advice for aspiring leaders. There are many capable people who could lead one but never do because they're too busy wishing they could lead a thousand. Starting small helps you concentrate on what you can do now-which often paves the way for bigger things later.

3. It provides the necessary step to take the next step.

You only can expand your life if you're moving. As my friend Tim Elmore has noted, "You can't steer a parked car."

When I talk about the importance of starting small, I'm not trying to dampen your enthusiasm or stifle your dreams. I'm simply giving you a practical way to address your current reality. Think big, but start small.

Don't despise those single small steps. Just take them. As my first leadership conference proves, you never know where they're going to lead.

Feedback at Dr Maxwell c/o slvguru@pldtDSL.net

Know the how-to's of realty installment sales

REAL estate developers, prospective home buyers, investors and real estate dealers are invited to attend a complete course on "Realty Installment Sales" that will be conducted by Urban Institute of Real Estate on Feb. 22, 1:30 to 6 p.m. at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) Conference Center (ACCEED), Benavidez corner Trasierra Streets, Legaspi Village, Makati City.

The seminar will cover the following topics: installment sales as a marketing technique; the various aspect of installment sale including provisions of RA 6552 (Maceda Law) on refunds and notices of cancellation; exemptions from Maceda Law; HLURB and other rules on installment sales; the financial aspect of installment sales including interest rate; applicable interest formulas; factors and its tables of value; equal periodic payments; amortization schedule; graduated payments—a new proposal; and computations of periodic payments using financial calculators and computers; taxation aspects of installment sales including latest BIR rules and when taxes may be paid on installment.

Urban is also conducting other seminars which can be attended separately, on the same time and venue as follows: Feb. 16—Investing in Real Estate: Opportunities, Techniques & What are Needed to Learn before Investing; Feb 17—Property Development and HLURB Rules And Regulations.

For more information call 681-0928 or 0916-426-9174 or at email urbanet@pacific.net.ph.

Wine and Dine, Hotels and Resorts: Delectable Blends of the Good Life

Dennis E. Dungao

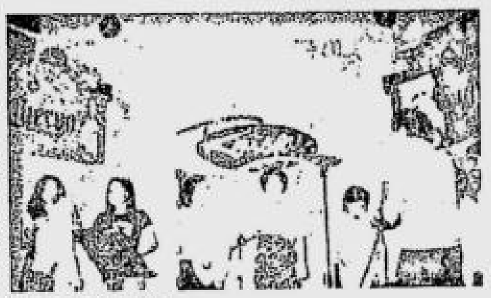
The feel to unwind and achieve true divertissement is basic. It is the indomitable urge of man to reward himself after his labors.

Wines and dining, hotels and resorts, these are some of the essentials to satisfy the ardor for the sprawling culture of leisure lifestyle that is currently taking this country.

Eat, drink, and be merry...

The world of wining and dining knows no boundaries for there is a bond amongst gourmands, gourmets and connoisseurs that transcends ethnic, social and geographical background. Cheers! And may the mouth enjoy.

Located at Tomas Morato, Sibil Bar and Restaurant offers not only entertainment, but good food too. Legendary for its hedonistic nights of endless bikini opens and even the scene of some celebrity squabbles, you will be surprised that this place actually knows how to cook. The Sibil Platter is sure to make your night a little spicier-along with those bottles of beer.



Chill out at Ratsky

Pier One has definitely redefined the face of night life, albeit even the palates of their throngs of patrons. Appetizing Pier One Lechon Sisig, Baked Cheesy Tahong, Sari-saring Sinugba, then wash them up with spirited drinks Pier 69 and Bangenge. Bangenge, with sixteen liquors mixed into it, I doubt it why drinkers won't go "bangenge"--- literally in every sense of the word! And do it so in style.

Of course, there is always my favorite chill out place, Ratsky Bar. Major performer Freestyle play every Thursday for the rest of February at Ratsky Malate, while Diether Ocampo with Blow jam it up with the crowd every Saturday. Hunk of a man Troy Montero displays his chocolate voice at Ratsky Morato every Saturday. Now that's entertainment! Notwithstanding the food and beverages which shall shame any fastidious connoisseur. Tongue Tempter and Test Tube Baby were spirited drinks to try and love.

At Cabalen, ordinary days can become grand fiestas with their buffet serving of traditional favorites like Kare-kare, Lechon, Sizzling Sisig and Crispy Crablets among others. The feast, incredibly priced at only 249 Php is a taste of celebrated Capampangan cuisine. "Manyaman queni Abe!" Now I'm speaking in tongues.

Vincafe is an overwhelming encounter. I cried serendipity finding "the Garden of Eden" in gourmet dining, and got to eat it! Accentuated by the idyllic ambience of the Clearwater Country Club, it is the grandest location in the heart of the Clark Special Economic Zone, even by Metro Manila standards. Vincafe with Yats Wine Club complimenting it with its vast cellars of exquisite wine is definitely a prime mover in educating our country to a wine lifestyle

Elegant stead in the heart of the city

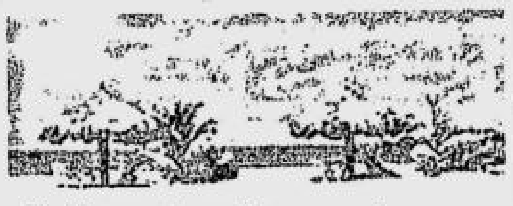
Every hotel is a kingdom in itself, and you, as a guest, its sitting monarch.

Having a commanding address at Taft Avenue and Roxas Boulevard, Taft Tower Hotel and Traders Hotel possess a million dollar view of famous Manila Bay.

Traders Club at the peak of Traders Hotel can boasts of the most breath-taking view and a 40% off promo is on the outing from January-February 2005. Most notable of Traders other attractions is its lounge, which according to Mr. Al borough, President of Railway Tours, UK, is the best in the bay area comparable to other cities like Hong Kong and Singapore.

Taft Tower Hotel is a no frills hotel that gives value for money. It is the sensible choice for no-nonsense businessmen. The function rooms are spacious while access to restaurants catering the middle and upper market teems at the lobby area.

The Marco Polo Davao is the choice of discriminating travelers to Metropolitan Davao. With 245 elegantly appointed rooms and suites built in 18 levels, it has not only a sight to behold but also elevated the standards of accommodation at par with the world.



Blue Water promise paradise

Still and breathless, am still is!

Resorts top my list of ideal retreats from stressful living in the big city. Go! Get away!

Nestled on a cove and having lush mountains as natural barriers, Montemar Beach Club is a delightful reason to see a-stone-throw-away Bataan. Rated "AAA" by the Department of Tourism, it is an ideal place for corporate and family outings. This leisure resort delivers enhanced and personalized services that encourage team building. It started out as a membership club, but has now opened its gate to the public. To quote Madam Vicky Gonzales, Montemar's current President, "Something this beautiful must really be shared to the people in general". Montemar caters to family of 5-500 and has a good number of expats regularly visiting it.

Montemar's amenities were superb. Starting at the rooms, they encourage family togetherness and simple rewards of civility. The Blue Pool, where my eight-year-old daughter, Denise, met an American playmate named Carrie is one of a kind. Here you can sip your cocktails amid cool, fresh water.

Seeing Montemar for the first time, it left this author still and breathless. The fine sand on its five hundred meter beach is very therapeutic to my battered city feet. The soft rippling of the sea breaking the erstwhile silence and lit by sunset was simply mesmerizing. It would be easy to get lost in one's imagination.

Getting to Montemar is a breeze! You don't actually have to take the long land route by car or bus. The Mt. Samat Ferry with a terminal at the CCP Complex at Roxas Boulevard is a top recommendation as mode of transportation. Sleek and fast, even the President of the country rides time and again. A well-appointed cabin and friendly crew will give you the first class feel.

The delectable invitation of Maribago Bluewater Beach Resort to embrace the charm of island living is in itself a call to live paradise on earth. Revel in the cozy comforts of the tropics. Enticing options for leisure and entertainment abound on the pristine white beaches or in the blue waters and lagoon-style pools.

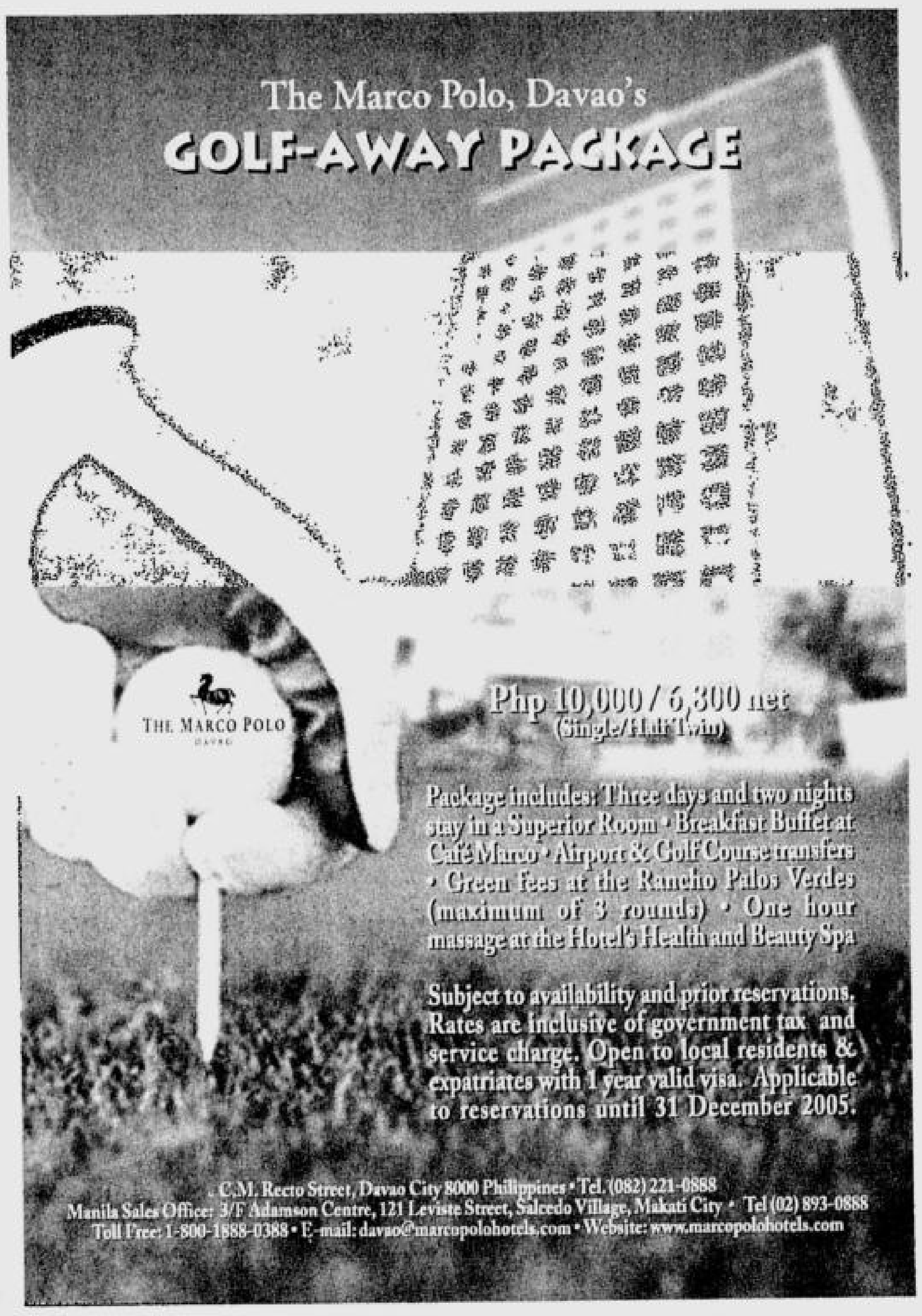
Maribago Bluewater Beach Resort goes distance to let you indulge in your caprice, even pagan pleasures. Its 110m beach front and 1.1 private island coupled with its restaurant, Allegro, and its bar, Pier 7 were simply incomparable.

Island Cove Resort and Leisure Park, a sprawling 12-ha island sanctuary situated in Kawit, Cavite gives you a reason to "rediscover life". This resort-hotel and lifestyle destination, only 45 minutes from the Coastal road, is becoming the venue for close-to-home vacations, dining and live entertainment.

Simply enjoyable, bask in the sun, play your favorite games, catch a fish or two and marvel at nature, these are but some of the offerings of Island Cove besides its affable service and stylish setting.

Best things in life are free?

They say the best things in life are free--- that much I agree. Well, if you go on living in dreamland that is, or even the AFTER life perhaps? To indulge in these elemental gratifications of the sun, food and wine is never a sin. True these offerings were not actually free. Spend those hard earn money on something worthwhile. Life is short, not even a bed of roses. In the meantime, let's relax and be pampered by life as it should be--- a good one!



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Laughter & Harmony
A Valentine Show featuring Ms. Nanette Inventor with The CompanY. on Feb 12, 2005, at the Cavite Hall. Dinner starts at 7pm, show is at 9pm
Tickets at P1,200 (Show, Dinner, Wine & Raffle) P850 (Show, Dinner and Raffle) • P500 (Show and Raffle). Tickets are available at SM Ticketnet and Island Cove.

A Taste of Havana
Island Cove turns 7! It's a Cuban Party with our top corporate clients, media friends, and dear patrons on February 19, 2005, 6pm at the Purple Ostrich. Island Cove will also launch its loyalty program, TICKET TO LIFE.

Red n' Wild
A red-hot dance party at the Purple Ostrich on February 12, 2005, Saturday, 9pm with DJ Kimozave and his Crew. Fiery games and cool prizes await participants. Tickets at P200 (CONSUMABLE).

Social Meetings
Island Cove gives special discounts and privileges for corporate and social accounts, all month long.
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Island Cove returns the favor... Book your functions for the year (Weddings, Parties, Conferences, Outings, Etc.)
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Rediscover Life...
Island Cove

All that's delicious and divine entwine at the Richmonde

Dennis E. Dungao and Jeff Cuyugan

A delightful encounter down by Ortigas Center

Services and fancy label in the hotel industry are standard characteristics. After all, room service, business center, restaurants, gyms, spas and such can be provided anywhere else.

At the Richmonde Hotel, the warm, old-fashioned welcome make guests feel right at home the moment they step into its elegant doors. Situated at San Miguel Avenue, right in the business center of Ortigas, this hotel takes its power to please quite seriously. The brisk and unobtrusive housekeeping services and small courtesies that give nuisance to esteemed guests are often overlooked at other hotels. Here these things were put into art form, a passion for undivided personal attention were almost ingrain. The smiles painted on each staff that render their service are genuine, not just perfunctory. This kind of brand will surely put every guest wonderfully at ease and culminates into one distinct Richmonde experience.

To please the eyes and the palates

Marvelous and enticing both the eyes and the palates, now what can be more delectable?

To experience the refinements of dining pleasure in a classic setting at the Richmonde Grill along with The Exchange Bar and the Lobby Cafe is simply divine! To quote resident Zu Chef Ed Santos, who had his stints on local and international culinary adventure,"The freshness of ingridients is important as well as the right blend of flavours and taste. Presentation is also a high priority." Indeed it was evident on the dishes. An international array of delightful dishes are serve throughout the day prepared by Chef Ed and his merry gang at the kitchen. This feast kicks off with a variety of hors d' oeuvers. At the Richmonde Grill, hot items like Beef Tender in Brandy Cream, Oyster with Spinach Roville and Crusted Leg of Lamb with Mint are favorites. Cold items Smoked Chicken Waldorf and Roast Pork Loin bathed in red wine were recommended "must try" too. After a hearty feast, satisfy the cravings of your sweet tooth by having Black Forest Gateau or Walnut Torte.

Of course, there is the paella feast going on at the Richmonde aside from the seemingly endless list of mouth-watering mainstays. Relish this luxuriant spread of flavorful arroz with a medley of succulent chicken, beef and pork meat sprinkled with tasteful mussels, shrimps, squids and colorful vegetables. This ala carte menu itself features the chef's skills.

And after that day of work and success, you can always relax at The Exchange Bar. It is open from 8pm to midnight. Lively performers play here nightly. Aside from a long list of good drinks to chose from, the pica-pica buffet is also worthy of mention. Deviled Chicken, finger-lickin' breaded fish, and Thai Noodles are but some of the delecatable items listed on the menu.

DELIGHTFUL buffet at Richmonde Grill

Business and an endless promise of leisure and bliss

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Whether deciding power moves for corporate executives or a leisure stay with family and friends, the Richmonde Hotel sees to it that it will be a memorable stay. The heated indoor pool is magnificently done, always inviting for a dip. Rooms offer a spectacular view of Metro Manila. The ablaze citylights, in a spectre of colors, as you view them from your window appears like gemstones on a velvet sheet. Luxuriant furnishings and chic designs also characterize every room. This spells grandiose in all its crowning glory. And as you contemplate and snuggle on your success, this would be enough to bring you into bliss.

The Richmonde Hotel is located at 21 San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Lunch buffet at The Richmonde Grill is served from 11:30am to 2:00pm, Sundays to Fridays, for only Php625++. Special discounts on room rates are available for local residents. For your inquiries and reservations, call 638-7777.

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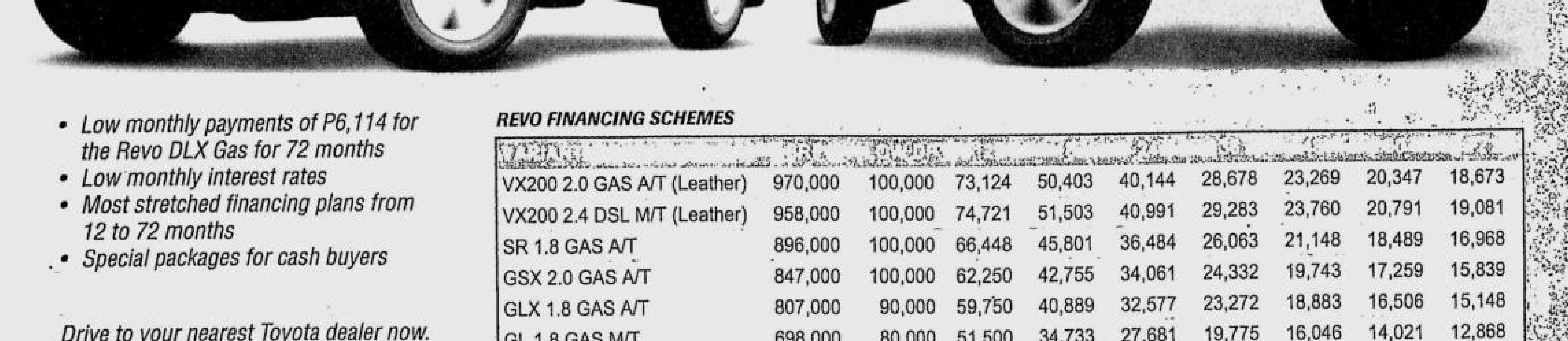

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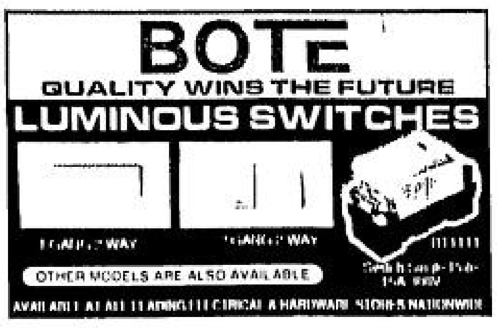
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2005 NATIONAL ARTS MONTH

NCCA holds month-long contests nationwide

THE 2005 National Arts Month opens tomorrow with a flurry of nationwide contests on the arts and culture.

The 2005 Arts Month kicked off yesterday with a parade at the Cultural Center of the Philippines and a concert at the Rajah Sulayman Park in Malate, Manila.

Organized by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, the Arts Month has for theme "Sining Gising: Crafting Identities for Social Transformation."

Cecile Guidote Alvarez, NCCA executive director and presidential adviser on culture, said the agency had shifted its initiatives and programs in line with President Macapagal-Arroyo's policy of promoting cultural education to counter the "culture of corruption."

The banner projects this year include the Bamboo Music Festival, Cinema Paraiso, Pelikula at Lipunan, National Artist on Radio; Culture in the Seats of Power, in which there will be cultural performances during the Malacañang flag-raising every Monday with the President in attendance; and art and heritage exhibits at the Senate, House of Representatives and the Supreme Court.

There will also be several regional arts and culture celebrations.

But perhaps the most unique aspect of this year's Arts Month is the series of nationwide contests to raise awareness on the power of the arts and culture to compel social change.

Textulang Pinoy

"Textulang Pinoy" is a month-long competition organized by the NCCA's National Committee on Literary Arts to promote regional literary forms—the *sawikain* and *tigsik* (of the NCR and Bikol), and *paktakon* and *tigmo* (Hiligaynon and Cebuano, respectively) through SMS technology. It is conducted with Globe Telecom.

The criteria for judging are originality, fluidity of the stanzas or lines, high level of rhyme scheme and content.

The *sawikain* is an old form of poetry. It is composed of 2-3 lines per stanza and has 12

NCCA/ C2

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• Practical Conversation: Fluency of English
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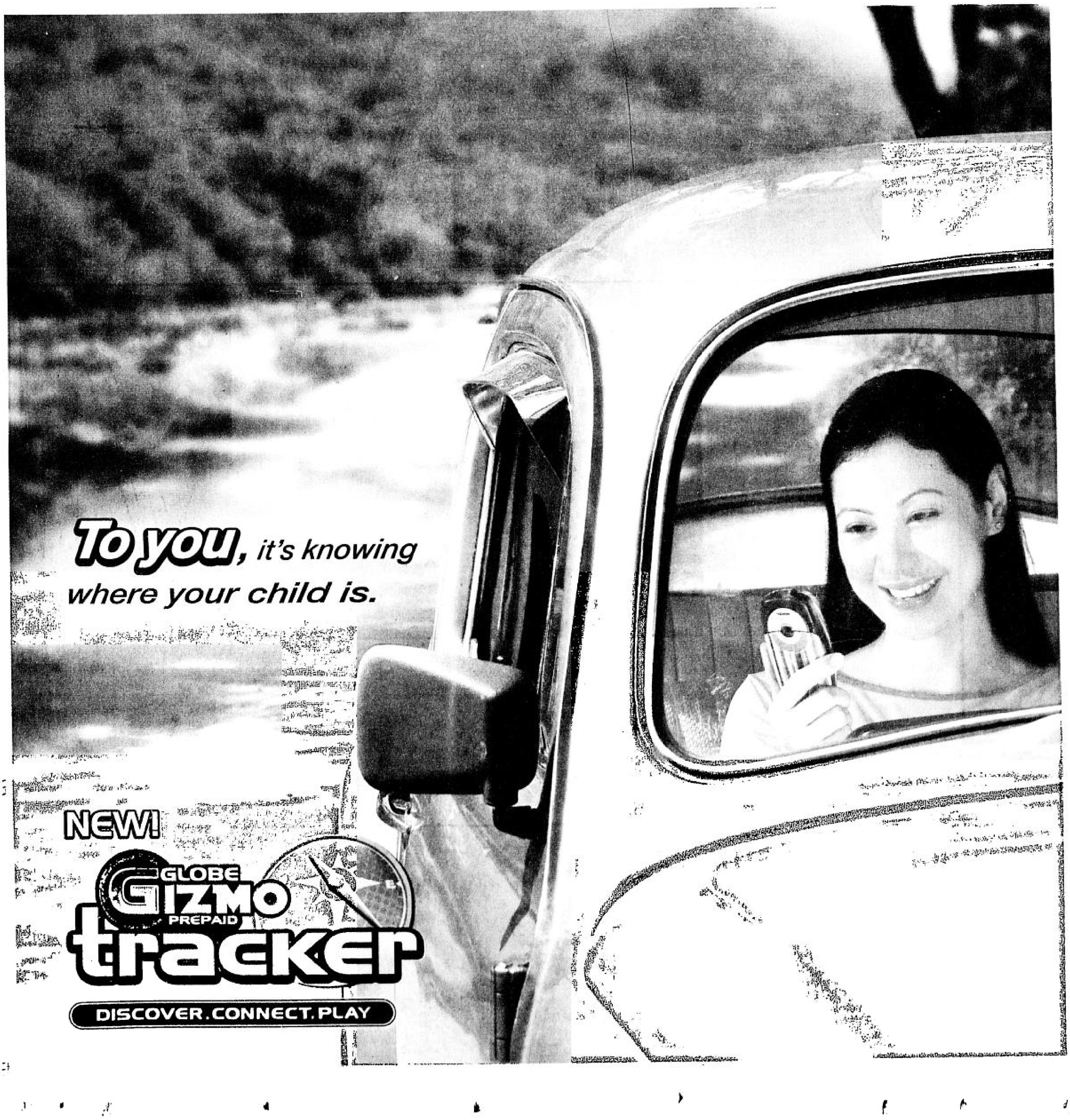


NCCA holds month-long contests nationwide

From page C1

syllables. Within the 36 syllables (12 each line), the poet needs to express one complete thought. *Sawikain* requires a discipline in expression and economy in words.

Example:

Ang hindi lumingon sa pinanggalingan
Di makararating sa paroroonan.

Each entry must be written in Filipino, revolving around the theme "respect and/or love for nature." Send entries through text, including name and address of the poet. Weekly winners will be announced.

The cut-off time for each week is at 3 p.m. of every Friday this February. Two grand winners will receive P5,000 each, while eight P2,000 consolation prizes will be given away.

Tigsik, meanwhile, is an old form of Bicol poetry which displays the natural talent of Bicolanos for riddles. It is composed of four lines with eight syllables each with a mono-rhyme scheme.

Example:

Tinigsik ko sakong dila
Nakukulong, nawawara.
Sa tabil kun nasasala
An sadit minadakula.

Each entry must be written in Bicol and should be about good or bad habits. There is no limit to the entry one can send. Each entry must be accompanied by the author's name and address.

Like the *Sawikain* contest, *Tigsik* is a weekly contest for February, with the cut-off time at 5 p.m. of every Friday.

Winners for each week will be announced every Monday. Only one winner will be declared "Tigsikero ng Linggo" (cash prize of P2,000), with second (P1,500) and third (P1,000) prizes. Four runners up (P500) will be declared.

Winning entries will be published in a book and will be included in "Tigsik" T-shirts. A few of these copies and T-shirts will be given away to the winners.

All those connected with the NCCA and Globe Telecom are not qualified to join the contest.

Tigmo is a riddle in the Cebuano language. Its common form is of two lines, with the same number of syllables per line, that rhyme. It must have imagery.

Example:

Kapti akong ikog kay mosawom ko.
(Hold my tail because I am about to swim underwater.)

Paktakon (in Hiligaynon) means "riddle" or "puzzle." In the past, it was recited during parties or wakes for the dead. It is in verse form, usually composed of two rhyming lines, although there are three-line and four-line stanzas, and sometimes the lines do not rhyme.

Example:

Baston ni San Josep
Indi maisip.
(St. Joseph's cane/
Cannot be counted)
Answer: Rain

Talamnan nga maputi,
Nga maitum sing binhi,
Lima ang nagatanum,
Duha ang nagatambong.
(Field of white
Black are the seeds
Five are the planters
Two are the watchers)
Answer: Letter

The entry should be a tigmo or paktakon written in Cebuano or Hiligaynon language). Entries could be about any subject, sent through text along with the name and address of the author before 3 p.m. of each Friday of February.

There is no weekly winner. A grand prize winner will be declared for the month.

Text entries to the following numbers: Manila—0927-92452-42 to -43 (for *sawikain and tigsik*) ; and Cebu —0927-9245240; Iloilo—0927-9245239; Davao—0927-9245238 (for *tigmo and paktakon*).

tinigsik ko sakong dila
nakukulong, nawawara
sa tabil kun

ILLUSTRATIONS: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

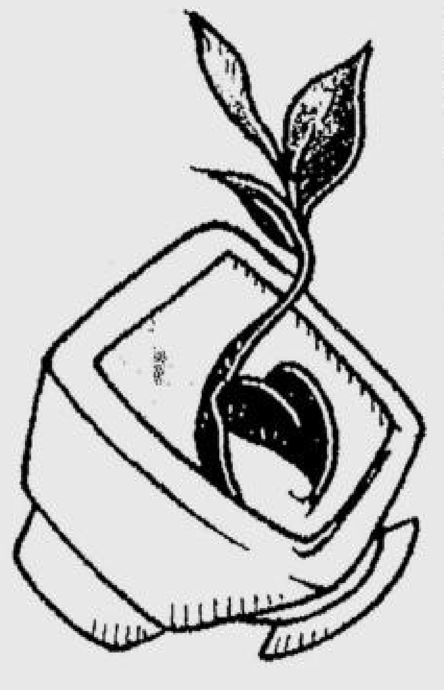
'Webgising' digital art contest

The "WebGising" Digital Art Contest is organized by the NCCA National Committee for Literary Arts.

The entries may cover any of the themes:

- Environment: "Kalinga Kalikasan"
- Fiscal crisis: "Pagkamalikhain sa Harap ng Krisis"
- Poverty alleviation: "Yaman-Diwa Laban sa Kahirapan"
- Corruption: "Huwag Ku-corrupt"

The contest is open to all Filipino citizens, 16 years old and above. A participant is limited to one entry per theme.



Size is 10 x 15.

Entries must be in TIF or JPEG file format. They can be submitted to the NCCA Public Affairs and Information Division, 6/F, NCCA Bldg., 633 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila.

For entries to be submitted online, the resolution is limited to 1500 x 2250 pixels. Owners of short-listed entries will be contacted for adjustment to maximum resolution for the final judging.

E-mail entries to webgising@ncca.gov.ph. Type WEBGISING 2005 ENTRY under subject heading.

Entry forms can be downloaded from www.ncca.gov.ph.

Deadline for submission of entries is Feb. 16.

Entries must utilize scanned imagery and digital paintings via available graphics software (e.g. Photoshop, Corel Draw, Infini-D, Raydream, Illustrator).

Only images made by participating artists shall be accepted.

Only original works shall be accepted. Scanned photographs, symbols or artworks from publications, or downloaded from the Internet, whose copyright belongs to other artists or corporations/entities are not acceptable. They subject entry to disqualification.

Short-listed entries will be printed in hard copies for final judging and exhibition. There shall be 10 short-listed entries per theme per judge for a total of 120 short-listed entries.

The virtual exhibit will be posted at the NCCA website, www.ncca.gov.ph, while the physical exhibit will be held at the Malacañang Museum on Feb. 21, during which the winners will be announced.

Each theme will have three winners, who will receive P25,000 (first prize), P15,000 (second), and P10,000 (third).

Contact the Art Association of the Philippines at (02) 3030907 (Dondon or Fidel); NCCA: (02) 5272209 (Ronan or Ferdie); or CVA: 0919-8261868 (Chris Rollo).

E-mail ncva@yahoogroups.com/ www.ncca.gov.ph

Anti-graft editorial cartoon and cartoon strip contest

Editorial cartoonists and comic strip artists are invited to join the Sining-Guhit competition.

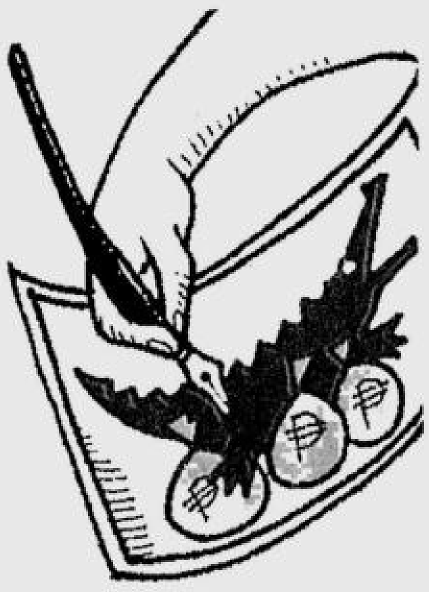
Organized by the Publishers Association of the Philippines Inc., the contest is open to all cartoonists and artists whose works are published in national broadsheets or tabloids, and in regional/provincial or community newspapers.

The cartoon or comic strip must depict Anti-Graft and Corruption as its central theme, in connection with NCCA's program to instill in the public "a paradigm shift of attitude, using culture and values education as a catalyst to displace the wrong values that breed the culture of graft and corruption to a culture of honesty and thoughtfulness."

Entries in the form of clippings of editorial cartoons or comic strips, of whatever size, should have been published from Jan. 19-Feb. 15, 2005.

Winners will receive P15,000 (first prize), P10,000 (second), and P5,000 (third). Winning entries will be presented at this year's 19th anniversary of the 1986 Edsa People Power Revolution, published in Agung, the official publication of the NCCA, and given to campus organs nationwide in cooperation with the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education.

Submit entries to the NCCA Public Affairs and Information Division, 6/F, NCCA Bldg., 633 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila, up to Feb. 16. Call 5275529.



Essay, poetry and songwriting contest

Open to all ages, the writing contest can either be in the form of an essay or poem with not more than 500 words, while the song must be original musical compositions put to music and recorded on a cassette tape, plus lyrics.

All entries must depict Anti-Graft and Corruption as its central theme.

This is in support of the United Nation's Development Programme's information program for the UN millennium development goals in line with President Macapagal-Arroyo's 10-point legacy agenda prioritizing the battle against corruption.

Cash prizes for essay and poem: P10,000 (first prize); P5,000 (second); P3,000 (third); and two honorable mentions (P1,000 each).

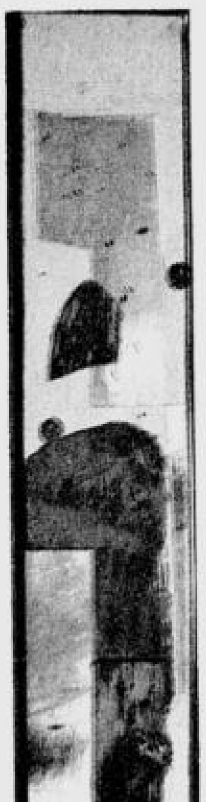
A single songwriting winner will get P10,000.

Winning entries will be presented at this year's Edsa anniversary celebration, published in Agung and given to all campus organs nationwide in cooperation with the DepEd and CHED.

Entries must be submitted to the NCCA Public Affairs and Information Division, 6/F, NCCA Bldg., 633 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila; or faxed to 5275529; or e-mailed at public_affairs@ncca.gov.ph. Deadline is Feb. 17. Call 5275529.

Cukingnan at Renaissance, Mayona in Baguio, Jarque at Avellana, PLDT at National Museum

VISUAL ARTS



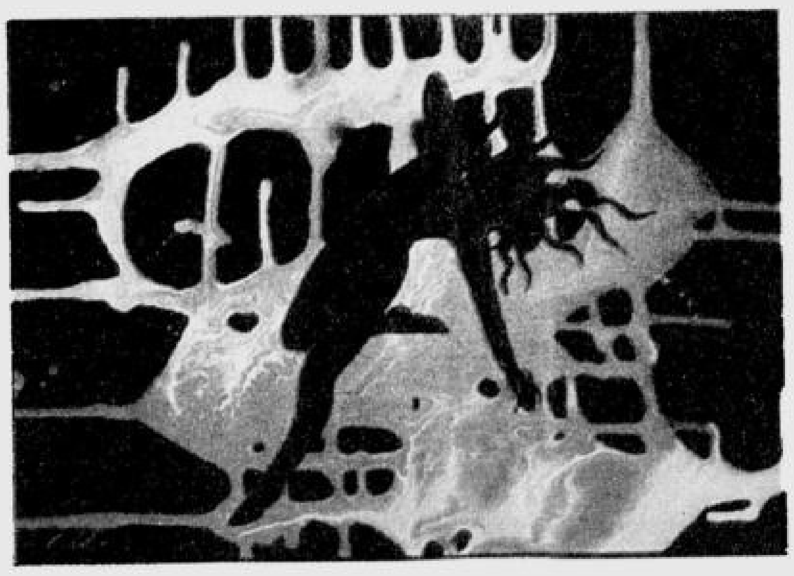
"MORNING Walk," By Eugene Jarque

ADDIE Cukingnan will hold her first abstract exhibit, "The Flow of Passion," on Feb. 1 to 8 in Renaissance Gallery (4th floor, Artwalk, SM Megamall). The oil-on-canvas. "The paintings are borne out of the freedom to just put paint on canvas and let my feelings take over. Then the figures came into the conceptualization," she said. This is the first time Cukingnan experimented with the negative side of feelings as a way to spark her passion in art.

FELIPE "Philip" Mayona will hold "February Blooms," an exhibit sponsored by Salou Palao-Sobrepeña and Billy King, at the Camp John Hay Manor lobby on Feb. 1 to March 1. Rebecca Domogan, Araceli Limcaco-Dans and Ben Hur Villanueva lead the guest at a ribbon-cutting ceremony tomorrow at 6:30 p.m. . Call (074) 446 0231 (-50) loc. 1017.

GALLERIA Duemila mounts Sandy Litchfield's "Place by Place" on Feb. 2-16 at the 4th floor, Artwalk, Megamall A. The artist's paintings and wall installations incorporate multiple interpretations of the landscape in a melange of different media. Call 6343261/ 8319990/ 6336687.

BELLA YAN-Ramirez will hold her first one-woman exhibition of 36 handcrafted cards and artworks, called "Likhang Sining," on Feb. 3-18 at National Telecommunications Commission Art Gallery, BIR Road, East Avenue, QC.



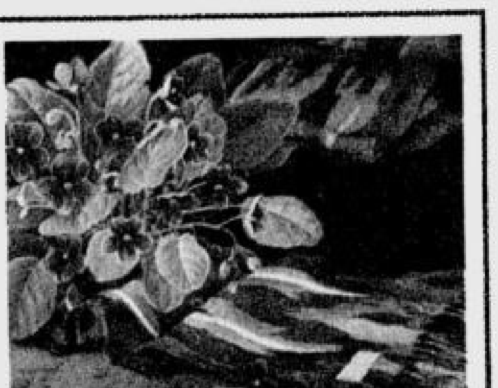
"EMBER" No. 3, by Addie Cukingnan

THE EXHIBIT of the winning paintings and other entries to the 2005-2006 Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.-Directories Philippine Corp. Telephone Directory Cover 19th Visual Art National Competition will be held Feb. 3-27 at the ground floor of the National Museum, Museum of the Filipino People, Agrifina Circle, Rizal Park, Manila. The winners will be announced on Feb. 3 at 6 p.m. by PLDT board chair Manuel Pangilinan and PLDT president Napoleon Nazareno.

ALLIANCE Francaise de Manille Annex Gallery presents Marvin Macalintal's "Paris Revisited" on Feb. 4-26 at the 2nd floor, LRI Business Plaza, 210 N. Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati. The exhibit features photographs taken last autumn. Call 8957585/ 8576935.

LES C'BEIGE Gallery features the works of Rene Quiroz and Editha Mata Guerrero. Free art lessons for beginners are ongoing. The gallery is located at 21st St., United Parañaque Subdivision, Sucat, Parañaque.

RICCO-RENZO Galleries holds "Artalks" by Italian-trained and -based Filipina art restorer, Anna Garcia until Feb. 12, from 1:30 to 5 p.m. in Bel-Air, Makati. Call 8982542 or 43.



"Lila," by Philip Mayona

CLAUDINE Sia exhibits a series of 28 colored images, mounted in 14 diptychs, at the UP Vargas Museum in UP Diliman up to Feb. 5. Compiled in a period of five years, Sia photographed rites and symbols of Filipino worship. showing images of celebration and passion. The show is held in cooperation with Silverlens Gallery and is part of the Vargas Museum's program for 2005 as Year of Photography. An artist's talk will be held on Feb. 3 at 1 p.m. at The Edge Gallery. Call 928-1927, 920-5319 loc. 7408.

EUGENE Jarque's recent works are on exhibit in "Inside Out", at the Avellana Gallery (House A-19, 2680 F.B. Harrison St. Pasay City). Jarque explores the accidental effects of his materials by using the wrong side of his canvases to create new compositions. This is the second exhibit of the new series of shows at the gallery with openings on Mondays at 9:30 in the morning. The exhibit is until Feb. 5.

New book on autism

THE BOOK "Federic's Flight: The Triumphant Travels of a Child with Autism," by early childhood education specialist Christine C. Roa, narrates the poignant but amazing journey of Roa's son Federic, who was diagnosed with autism, from a world of seeming hopelessness to one of edification. It is a story of courage and hope and a shining demonstration of parental love.

The book will be helpful to parents of autistic children as it contains pertinent information such as how to detect symptoms of autism, leisure activities for children with special needs, guidelines for behavior management and teaching social skills, a listing of support groups and related websites and books.

As an early childhood education specialist, author Christine C. Roa is a pioneer in mainstream education for children with special needs. She is the managing directress of South Kids International School in Multinational Village in Parahaque City. She headsBrighter Beginnings Early Education Consultancy.

The book will be launched on Feb. 4, 6 p.m., at PowerBooks Greenbelt. It is available at PowerBooks and National Book Store.

Federic's Flight
The Triumphant Travels of A Child with Autism
written by
Christine C. Roa

FEU presents 'Love Duets'

CELEBRATE the month of love with a dash of romantic songs featuring two of the country's prized classical artists—tenor Nolyn Cabahug and soprano Ma. Rachelle Gerodias—in a special Valentine's concert at the FEU Auditorium in Sampaloc, Manila, on Feb. 8 at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

The duo will be assisted by award-winning pianist Sabrina Villaflor as they render well-loved duets from operas, *zarzuelas*, *kundimans* and Broadway musicals.

Titled "Love Duets," the special concert features a broad musical fare to capture the Filipinos' romantic character.

Cabahug and Gerodias won as best classical performers of the Aliw Awards. They are sought-after soloists by symphony orchestras and cultural organizations here and abroad.

The show, directed by Manolet Garcia, is a production of the FEU President's Committee on Culture in cooperation with the Cultural Planners Association of the Philippines. It is part of the school's year-long concert series geared towards enhancing the cultural appreciation of FEU's academic community. Admission is free.

Bamboo organ festival begins Feb. 3

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

THE INTERNATIONAL Bamboo Organ Festival will be held Feb. 3-11 at the St. Joseph's Church in Las Piñas, home of the famous bamboo organ.

Highlight of the festival is the Manila premiere of several works including Bach's Ascension Oratorio, Handel's Ultrecht Te Deum and Jubilate, two versions of Stabat Mater by Scarlatti and Schubert, Monteverdi's Gloria for 7 Voices, Ives' Psalm 90, and Rossini's Messa di Gloria.

Performers are international as well as local artists, or friends of the festival who, at one time or another, performed in it. Foreign artists are organist Guy Bovet from Switzerland; Luc Ponet, organ, and Manu Mellaerts, trumpet, from Belgium; conductor Josef Doeller and his choir, Domkantorei Graz, from Austria; and Miles Morgan, former festival director and conductor.

Their participation is made possible through the Belgian, Swiss and Austrian embassies.

Philippine artists include sopranos Rachelle Gerodias and Katrina Saporsantos, mezzo Agnes Barredo, tenor Ronan Ferrer, countertenor Mark Anthony Carpio, bass and choral conductor Jonathan Velasco, collaborative pianist Mary Anne Espina, Ateneo Chamber Singers, Philippine Chamber Choir, Las Piñas Boys Choir, Diego Cera Trio, BSJ Quintet, Festival Choir, and the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra.

At the press launch recently at the Ang Hang Restaurant, Della G. Besa, festival artistic director, emphasized that these "friends are stalwarts who had kept the hallmark of excellence of the festival, making it alive for three decades now." She added that the festival was as unique as the bamboo organ itself, referring to the specialized nature of the music program that focused on early music or predominantly Baroque music, among others.

BAMBOO team. Standing are conductor Gerardo Fajardo and artistic director Della Besa. Seated are organist Armando Salarza and soprano Rachelle Gerodias

ERIC ARAZAS

Many works, which have not been heard locally, have been offered, complemented by new works of Filipino composers.

And, in the spirit of an international festival, Filipino and foreign artists have been invited to perform. Despite the changes going on in the country, including the tight economic situation, the festival was expected to stay, Besa said.

Armando Salarza, the first scholar sent by the Bamboo Organ Foundation for organ as well as church music study in Germany and Austria, said apart from the concerts, the festival would include an educational component through the holding of master classes.

Guests will be welcomed by Monsignor Albert Venus, parish priest of the church and president of the foundation. A positive development for the parish, which can increase audience attendance, is the fact that it is now part of the diocese of Parañaque, that includes not just Parañaque but also Muntinlupa, in addition to Las Piñas.

Choral director Jonathan Velasco has asked for total support of the festival. He said Filipino artists who had performed at the festival got international exposure and done well to project the image of the country.

Prof. Velasco, who sat in the jury of several international competitions and was guest conductor abroad, has been invited to sit as Philippine representative to the Choir Olympics for 2004-2008.

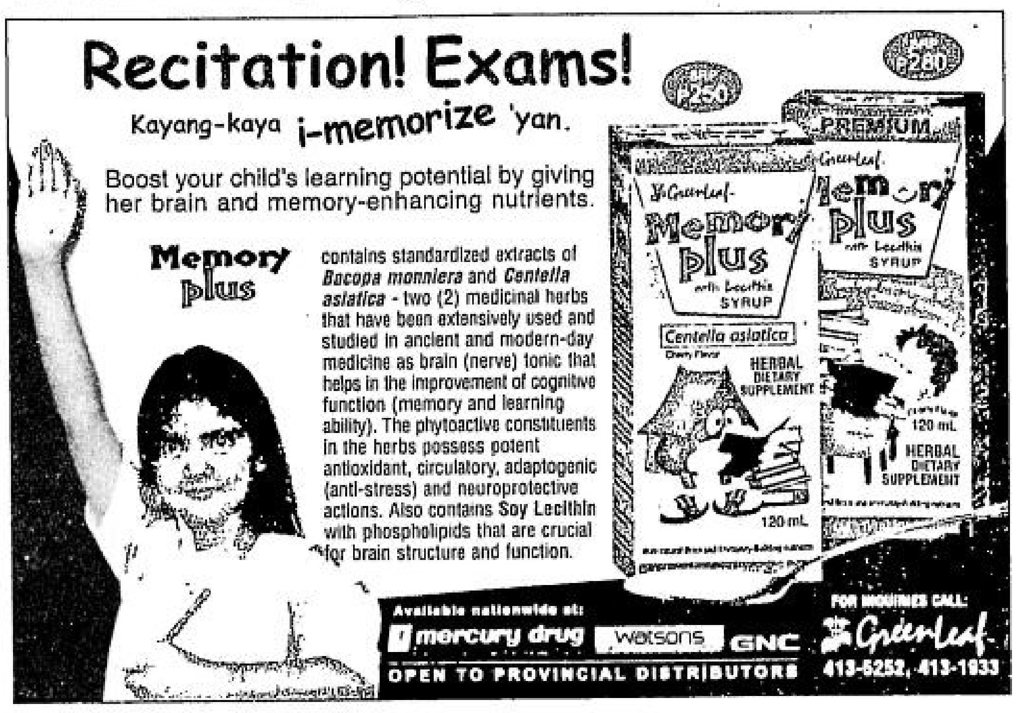
Gunther Titsch, president of the Interkultur Foundation in Polheim, Germany, made the invitation. The Choir Olympics will be held in 2006 at Xiamen, China.

Soprano Gerodias, with collaborative pianist Mary Anne Espina, awed the media with her superb rendition of Philippine classical love songs, Abelardo's "Bituing Marikit" and "Mutya ng Pasig."

The "Concert Under the Trees", held outside the church and has now become a tradition, will feature the country's top vocal ensembles such as the CompanY, The Opera, and TUX, with Aiza Seguerra and Ella May Saison in "Kantepella at Las Piñas"

"Fiesta Musika," which features an all-Philippine program, is a new addition to the festival. It shall include organ, choral and chamber compositions and songs culled from Filipino *zarzuelas*.

Tickets to the festival sell at P500, P300 and P200. They are available at SM Ticket Net, the Cultural Center of the Philippines box office, Landmark, and the Las Piñas Gift Shop, tel. 5103839. Call the festival office at 8257190.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Rumors, facts and humor

By Walter Ang
Contributor

WHILE it is part and parcel of the Filipino way of life, rumor-mongering is not exactly something that should fall under the category of national pride. It is a little comforting, therefore, that Tanghalang Pilipino's latest production reminds us that gossiping is not necessarily an exclusive Filipino pastime.

It is something that cuts across countries and cultures, as evidenced by Luigi Pirandello's comedy "Così è (se vi pare!)" or "It is so! (If you think so)."

This tale revolving around juicy gossip and malicious rumors has been translated by Jerry Respeto as "'Yun na nga! (Kung yun na nga)" for local audiences to relish.

Pirandello is a Nobel laureate whose 1921 play "Six Characters in Search of an Author," was recently proclaimed "the most original play of the 20th-century." Even if "It is so!" was written in Italy 1918, TP's adaptation provokingly shows how it could very be Manila 2005.

Dissecting brood

The TP Actors' Company deftly fills the roles of the Agazzi family and a whole plethora of characters who do nothing but dissect the goings-on of the new neighbors in town: Signor Ponza, his wife and his mother-in-law Signora Frola. These gossips wonder why Signora Frola lives alone and is never seen with her daughter.

AWARD-WINNING actor and film director Mario O'Hara graces the Tanghalang Pilipino stage, this time as the inimitable Lamberto Laudisi in the noted Pirandello comedy.

The Agazzi family and other townsfolk feign hospitality and concern when the Ponzas call on them. However, as soon as the Ponzas are barely out of the door, suspicion, doubt, skepticism, fabrication and fibbing become the order of the day.

The only voice of reason amid this buffet of lies is Signora Agazzi's brother Lamberto Laudisi, who watches and listens on the side. Laudisi is the Greek chorus with a conscience, more so after everyone is thrown into a doozy when Signor Ponza and Signora Frola independently accuse the other of being insane.

The look of the production builds on the characters' "*plastikan*" toward the Ponza family by bedecking everyone in plastic, literally. Costume designer John Abul ingeniously transforms linoleum tablecloth (the kind sold in Divisoria that comes in tacky, gaudy designs) into flamboyant, eye-candy couture. Set consultant 'Riz Herbosa, on the other hand, complements the costumes with kitschy furniture still wrapped in plastic.

Our world

This is the synthetic, pathetic world where director Herbert Go and assistant director John Victor Villareal pokes fun at the Pinoy's penchant for *tsismis* and satirizes victims of the nouveau riche syndrome.

One of the most hilarious devices they use in this production is making the entire cast eat constantly throughout the play. Every single person who comes into the Agazzi household brings a customary *pasalubong* of merienda. The menu starts off with *shingaling* and goes on to include *siopao*, *broas*, *suman*, popcorn, even melon seeds.

The smorgasbord of Pinoy delicacies ends with what may be a symbolic *kamote-cue*. Highlighting the symbiotic partnership of food and gossip definitely packed a creative wallop.

Great energy

The ensemble cast had great energy and constantly elicited howls of laughter. They obviously seemed to have fun with their roles, gamely hamming it up for the audience.

We even caught Signora Agazzi using her water goblet as a finger bowl—nonchalantly rinsing her fingers in her own drink and then, without batting an eyelash, proceeding to drink from the same goblet.

Skyzx Shannah Labastilla, playing the Gobernor who later on appears in the play to mediate the confusion, does a spot-on impersonation of Miriam Defensor Santiago.

It's wonderful to see how this production does not simply present a translation of Pirandello's play, but a very tongue-in-cheek adaptation that comes alive with very Filipino quirks and references to Pinoy pop culture.

The original butler in the original script is transformed into a scene-stealing, jaded *katulong* who, at one point in the play, brings out a folding chair into the family dining room and sits down to watch the telenovela-esque proceedings—while eating watermelon seeds, of course.

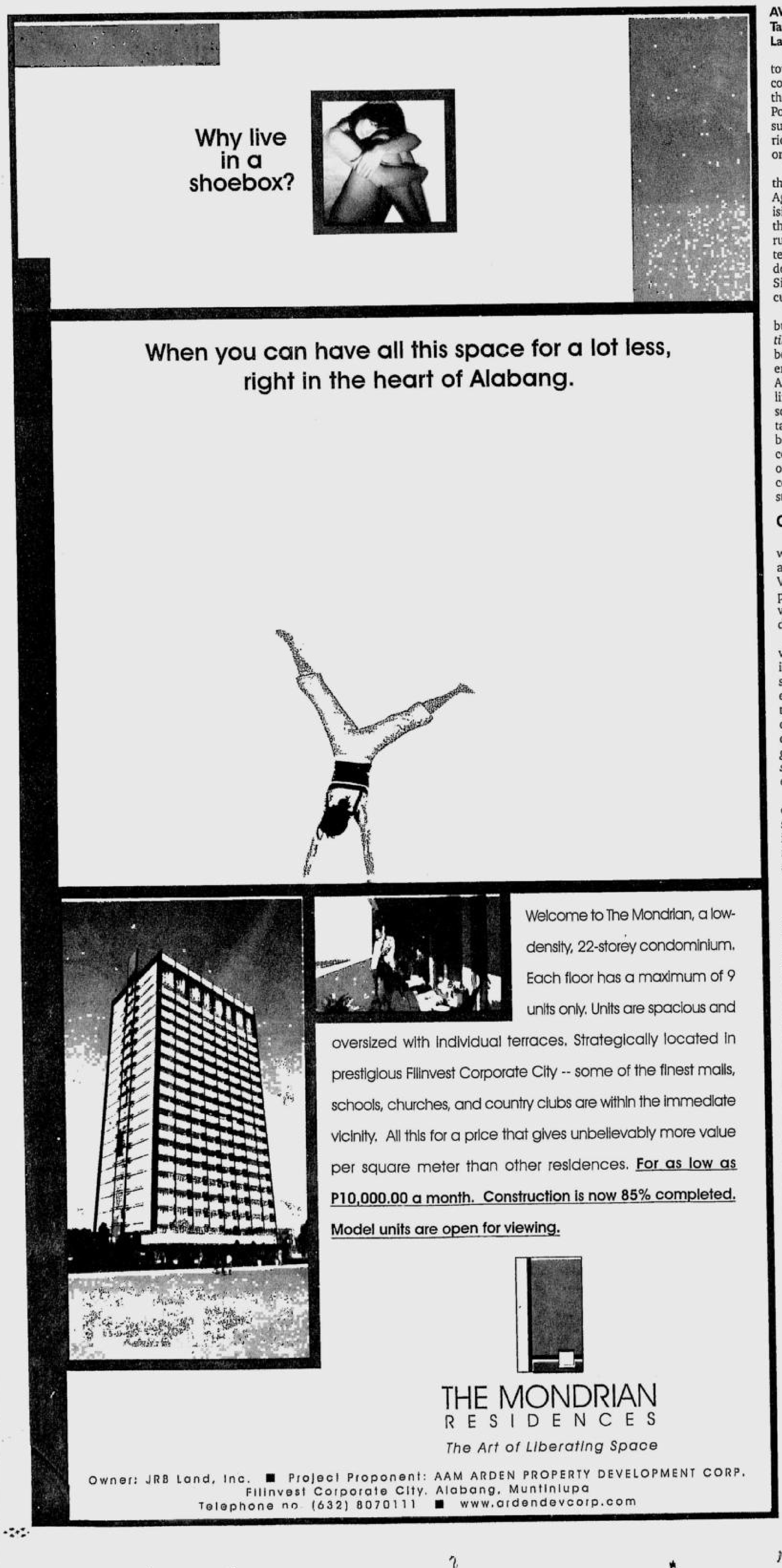
As the play nears its poignant end, a cross-dressing neighbor adds to the confusion of rumors with his version of the events in cryptic swardspeak!

These two seemingly marginal characters provide an interesting foil to the spirit of Pirandello's farce. At the end of the day, when it comes to the truth and its many tangents and convolutions, are we really just a little lost, watching on the sidelines, trying to make sense of it all?

"'Yun na nga!" (Kung 'yun na nga) runs until Feb. 6. Call 8323661 or 8321125 loc. 1620/21.

Email the author at waltzang@mail.com

CHYNNA Roxas, Wenah Nagales, Skyzx Labastilla and Catherine Racsag



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Be a heritage vigilante!

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

THE COUNTRY needs more watchers to keep our heritage from vanishing at the rate that it does nowadays.

If you want to do your part in preserving our culture, here are some suggestions on what to do to contribute your bit for the Philippines.

To value your heritage, you must learn about it. Join a walking tour of one of Manila's heritage areas.

Go to museums and take a good look at what they've got. The Central Bank Gold Collection at the Metropolitan Museum (Roxas Boulevard, Manila) is stunning.

> Be vigilant about development around a heritage site. Rouse public interest or alarm over a heritage site that is under threat

The Museum of the Filipino People at the National Museum in Manila presents Philippine culture in an engaging, interactive learning atmosphere which is a lot of fun.

Get a feel of how it was to be an *ilustrado* in the Spanish colonial era. Check out colonial lifestyle museums like Casa Manila in Intramuros, Bahay Nakpil in Quiapo, Museo De la Salle in Dasmariñas (Cavite), Casa Gorordo in Cebu City, Balay Negrense in Silay (Negros Occidental).

The idea behind taking a close look at the fabulous collections in each of these house museums is to realize the excellence of Filipino craftsmen and to see that we are heirs to a rich tradition, not to continue the fallacy that anything Spanish in the Philippines is evil, as the "Museum of Horrors" in Intramuros mistakenly perpetuates.

Feel Philippine greatness. Travel to a Philippine World Heritage site to experience being in one of the great places of the planet.

World Heritage sites must pass exacting Unesco standards, which attest to their global uniqueness and universal value, making these truly outstanding places which make one proud to be Filipino.

Five of the over 800 World Heritage Sites are in the Philippines : 1) Tubbataha Reef Marine Park in Palawan, 2) the Baroque churches of the Philippines, which include San Agustin in Intramuros, the churches of Paoay in Ilocos Norte, Santa María in Ilocos Sur, Miag-ao in Iloilo, 3) Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordillera, 4) the Historic City of Vigan and 5) Puerto Princesa Subterranean National Park in Palawan.

Monitor

Take a look at how our World Heritage sites are being maintained. Under Unesco agreement, the Philippine government is responsible for the maintenance of its World Heritage sites.

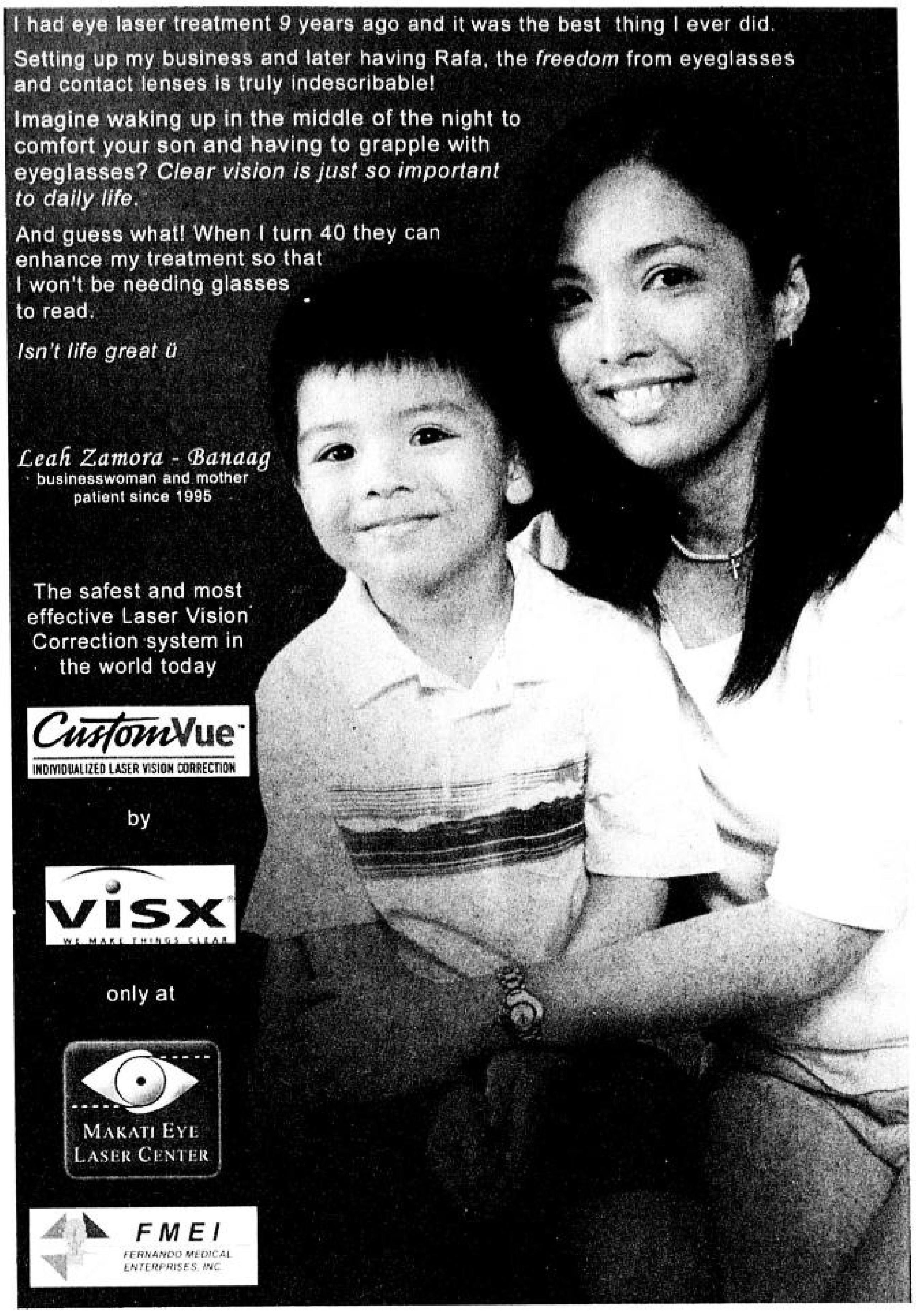
How to see if they are being maintained properly?

Remember that as much as possible these sites should remain in their original condition. That means no alteration or remodeling for buildings. Natural sites should remain in their pristine condition. Inside protected sites, no setting up of fast-food and souvenir stands is allowed.

Any repairs to protected buildings should be done following the same old-fashioned methods that constructed them, unlike many churches that now replace timber trusses with steel and the roof with galvanized iron. Its effects on the old structural system are as disastrous and inappropriate as plugging a hole in a leather shoe with plastic.

Looking around is the best way to develop an appreciation for heritage.

BE/ D2



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[1] Walzem, R.L., C.J. Dillard, and J.B. German. Crit. Rev. Food & Sci & Nutr. 42:353, 2002.

[2] [illegible] A, Cancer Res 1994;54(5):1969-1975.

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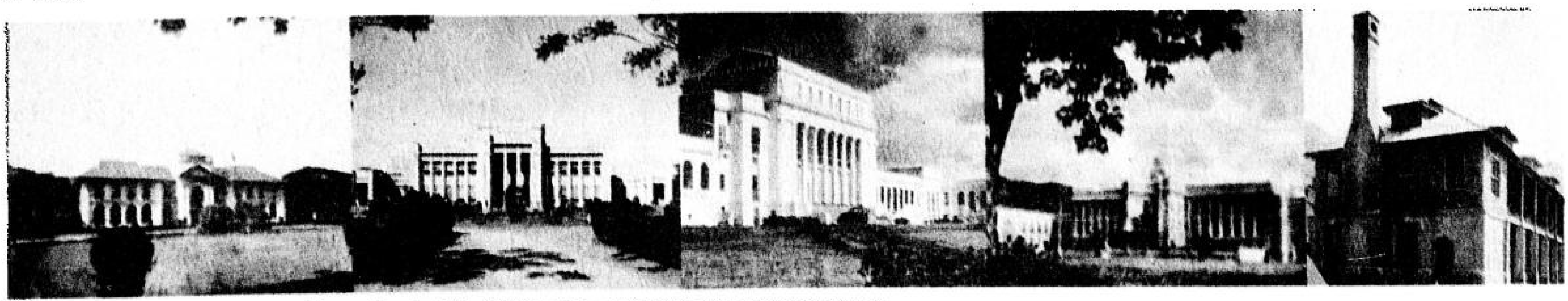


A TWO-MONTH research of various archives and libraries in the US yields photographs of American colonial structures.

Rare photos of American colonial architecture in show

THE ARRIVAL of the Americans heralded a new social and cultural climate for the Filipinos who earlier experienced 3 ½ centuries of Spanish domination.

American colonial administration's policy encompassed the establishment of municipal governments, free public education and health-care system, which required the building of structures such as capitol buildings and municipal halls, schools, hospitals and other public structures.

As a result, the architecture in the Philippines slowly adopted American innovations.

The early years of the American regime began in a frenzy of repair and reconstruction carried out by military personnel. From the brick, stone and mortar edifices characterized by round arches, brick-tiled roof and white-washed walls of the Spanish era, the Americans introduced an architecture that was made of 20th-century building materials: reinforced concrete (then later concrete hollow blocks), glass and galvanized-iron sheets.

The use of the materials, supplemented by new construction methods and technology, gave rise to edifices constructed in an architectural style that was either entirely new or a synthesis of American style and Spanish elements assimilated within the country.

In 1901, the Philippine Commission recommended the appointment of an architect to put direction to the architectural thrust of the Philippines.

The first appointee was Edgar K. Bourne the insular architect from 1901-1905, followed by William Edward Parsons, the consulting architect from 1905-1914. Daniel Burnham, the famous Chicago urban planner, made Parsons' appointment possible.

The last American consulting architect was Ralph Harrington Doane, who served from 1916-1918.

Assimilation

Having gradually assimilated influences of American architecture, the Philippine landscape today shows the influences of both the Spanish and the American. Bourne's architecture showed respect for Spanish architecture, eventually retaining the character, features and elements of that style.

Even Parsons' architectural designs showed leanings toward the Spanish.

In time, the neoclassic, characterized by columns and pediments, began to appear in many public structures, especially in the capitol and municipal buildings as well as in schools and important government buildings.

These buildings are the subject of the photo exhibit "The American Colonial Architecture," organized by the Center for Intercultural Studies of the University of Santo Tomas. The research was conducted by Norma I. Alarcon, an architect and faculty of the UST College of Architecture.

The photos in the exhibit are the product of a two-month research at the US National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland, US Library of Congress, and the New York Public Library through a fellowship grant from the Asian Cultural Council New York.

About 900 photographs were retrieved, 50 were selected for this exhibit.

The exhibit emphasizes the need to preserve the few remaining contributions of Americans in the evolution of Philippine architecture.

It is a preview of the book "The American Colonial Architecture in the Philippines," to be published before the year's end.

The UST Center for Intercultural Studies, says director Cynthia Luz P. Rivera encourages researchers from the Pontifical University to undertake retrieval projects which seek to enrich mainstream understanding of the character of the nation's productivity in the arts (architecture, music, visual arts, literature) and the manner in which artistic production is informed by its context.

The exhibit is a mere fragment of an unimaginable corpus of unexhibited photographs on the subject found in the archival and special collections in the US says Rivera said. She adds that UST hopes the exhibit and book will provide a novel dimension to, if not an altogether alternative insight into and appreciation of, American colonization from an architectural perspective.

"The American Colonial Architecture: A Photo Exhibit" will be unveiled today at 5:30 p.m. at the main gallery of the UST Museum of Arts and Sciences. Call 7409716.

Be a heritage vigilante!

From page D1

Aside from looking, you should develop an appreciation through all of your senses—taste, touch sound, and smell. That is because heritage is not confined just to architecture and urban planning, but includes all of the expressions of Filipino creativity like poetry and literature, music, dance, the visual arts, and even everyday stuff like fashion, folk art, and cuisine. Nor does something of heritage value have to be old.

Heritage towns and their architecture simply are the packages where heritage is developed, as a *bahay-na-bato* with all of its contents are heritage of the Spanish colonial lifestyle.

The many developments sprouting in suburban Manila, with exotic names like Città Italia, are bound to become 21st century heritage when our grandchildren reach their time.

Now comes the vigilance part. If you see a historical place that seems to have been overlooked, damaged or poorly maintained, blow the whistle!!

Are the changes appropriate? Do the new designs complement or damage the heritage architecture?

Document it with pictures, sketch maps, and write descriptions of whatever you think is not right in the place. Submit the information to the Committee on Monuments and Sites of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (fax 02 527 2191, email info@ncca.gov.ph). They know what to do and whom to contact.

Be vigilant about development around a heritage site. Rouse public interest or alarm over a heritage site that is under threat. Heritage, after all, belongs to everyone, so each Filipino has a right to how it is preserved.

Not all heritage vigilante stories are success stories. The destruction of the Jai Alai building in Manila is an example. While a huge public outcry was going on, the building was demolished right under the protestors' noses.

Carcar, Tayabas examples

Things have gotten better since the Jai Alai days. For instance, take recent developments in the heritage town of Carcar in Cebu.

After a long, patient and vigilant campaign by the Carcar Heritage Conservation Society (CHCS) to mainstream conservation activities with local government policies, Mayor Barcenas of Carcar issued in December 2004 an Executive Order which formed the Carcar Municipal Tourism and Heritage Council.

Council members are a mix of ex-officio officials, conservationists and local property owners, a good cross-section of Carcaranon stakeholders, with the support of Cebu Gov. Gwen Garcia and Rep. Eddie Gullas.

The council is the first step in bridging the gap between government officials and conservationists in preserving the heritage character of Carcar.

Malagonlong Bridge in Tayabas, Quezon, recently made it to the INQUIRER's front page. Respecting the heritage value of the 1840-bridge, town officials ordered the re-routing of a highway to bypass the bridge.

Officials now plan to construct a fine-dining restaurant on top of the bridge. Purists ask, Is a restaurant appropriate? What about its history of being one link in the road network developed by the Spanish to transport goods to Southern Luzon? What about its significance as a feat of engineering?

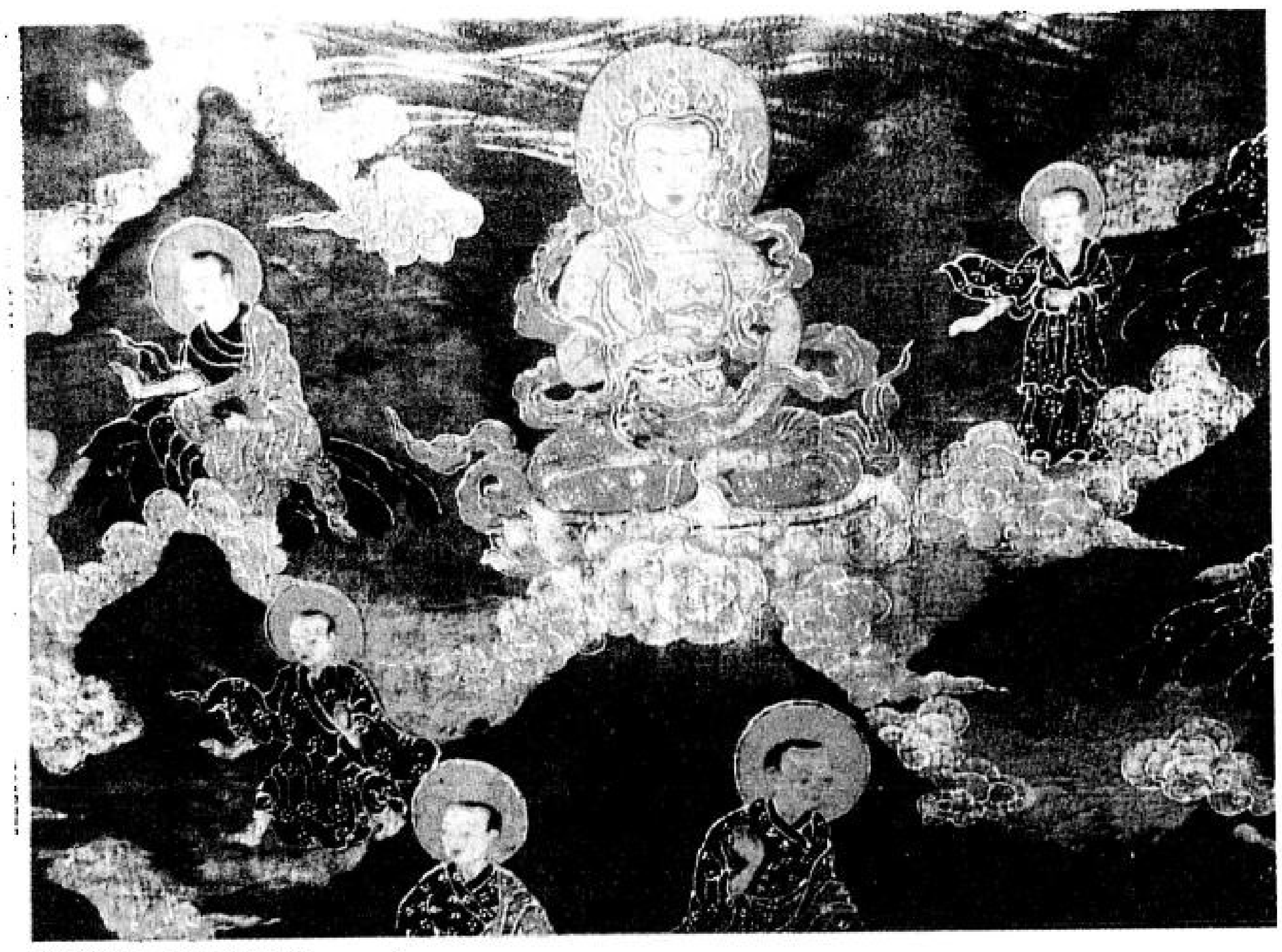
Maybe the restaurant could have an exhibit that makes people aware of the historic and heritage impact of the bridge while serving Tayabas cuisine. Filipinos are not a heritage-conscious people, so if food will draw people to the bridge to experience heritage, then so be it.

However, here is a word to the heritage vigilante about the bridge. Restaurants were built on top of the Intramuros walls, and their foundations dug into the stones and waste pipes imbedded into the centuries-old walls. That is totally inappropriate. It permanently damages the heritage structure.

An appropriate restaurant would set tables under umbrellas on top of the bridge. As they do in similar restaurants atop similar heritage structures in Latin America, no cooking is done.

If the heritage watcher sees inappropriate construction happening in Malagonlong Bridge (or in any other heritage structure for that matter), then be a good vigilante and blow the whistle.

E-mail your feedback to afvillalon@hotmail.com



DEITY with lotus support

Door-painting treasures from Tibet

By Amadís Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

THE CHINESE communists invaded Tibet in 1950, forcing the Tibetan leader, the Dalai Lama, to flee across the Himalayas and eventually to seek asylum in India, where he set up a government in exile.

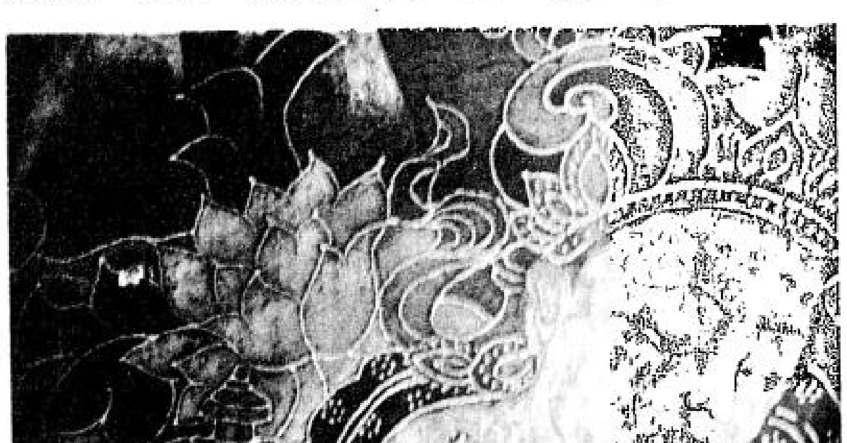
The Dalai Lama was only 15 at the time; he remains in India to this day. Those in a position to know say the spiritual leader no longer advocates independence from China, but "meaningful autonomy." This has displeased Tibetans who are still struggling for independence.

The Chinese occupation of Tibet was not gentle. One-sixth of the population is said to have perished, wildlife dwindled, and millions of ethnic Han Chinese were encouraged to settle in the conquered territory.

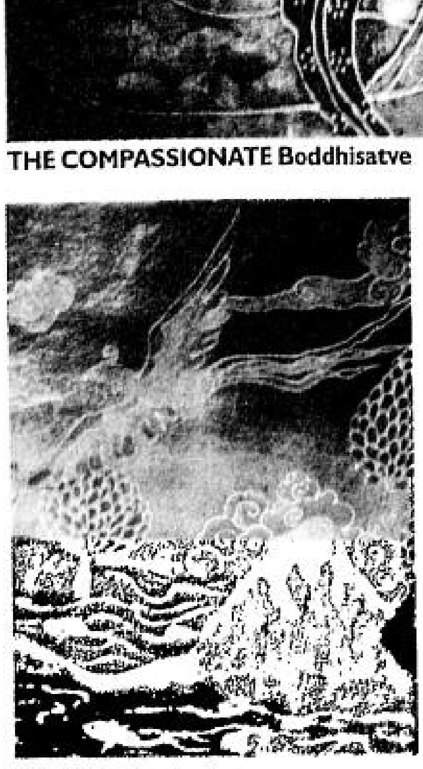
Another victim of the occupation was the Tibetan religion and culture. Of the more than 5,000 Buddhist monasteries, less than 20 remain today. In recent years, for tourism and revenue purposes, the Chinese government has allowed the reconstruction of a few monasteries.

These monasteries had exquisite painted doors which reflected Tibetan-Buddhist beliefs, traditions and deities.

Some of these door-paintings, circa late 19th century, are now for sale and on display indefinitely at the Tomlinson Collection-Gallery (40 Jupiter cor. Paseo de Roxas, Makati City; tel. 8957618).



THE COMPASSIONATE Boddhisatve



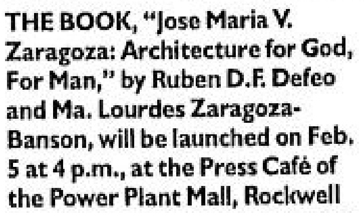
MYTHICAL animals

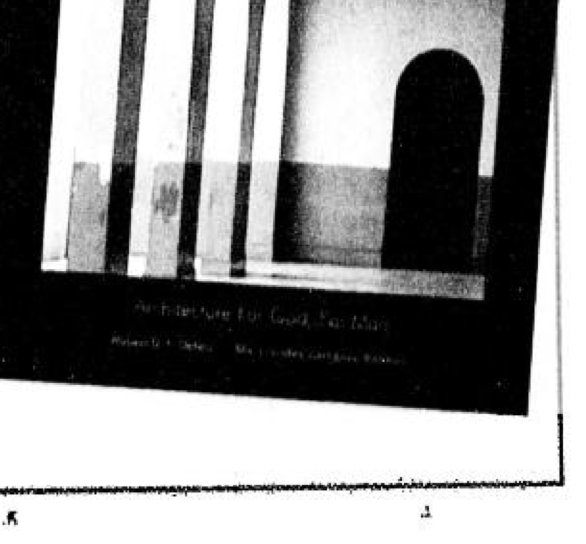
The collection includes representations of Boddhisatvas, "beings destined for Awakening," disciples of Buddha, mythical and real animals (a tiger symbolizes strength, a deer longevity); an Indian wedding ceremony, and sages who have attained freedom from the cycle of suffering and rebirth.

One sage is shown with a conch shell which, with its low and prolonged sound, symbolizes the sound of Buddhist law.

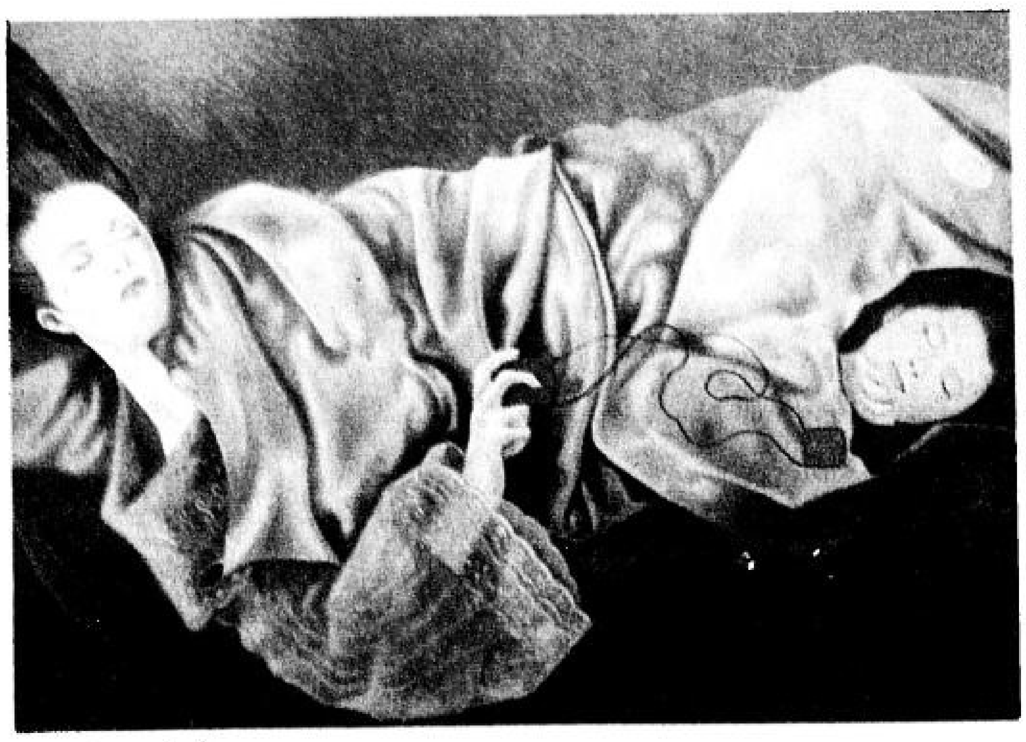
The door-paintings are a visual delight, in addition to having spiritual significance for the Buddhist. The colors are vivid red, yellow, orange, earth brown, green and black.

They are also collectors' items, cultural treasures, which will be on display until all are sold.

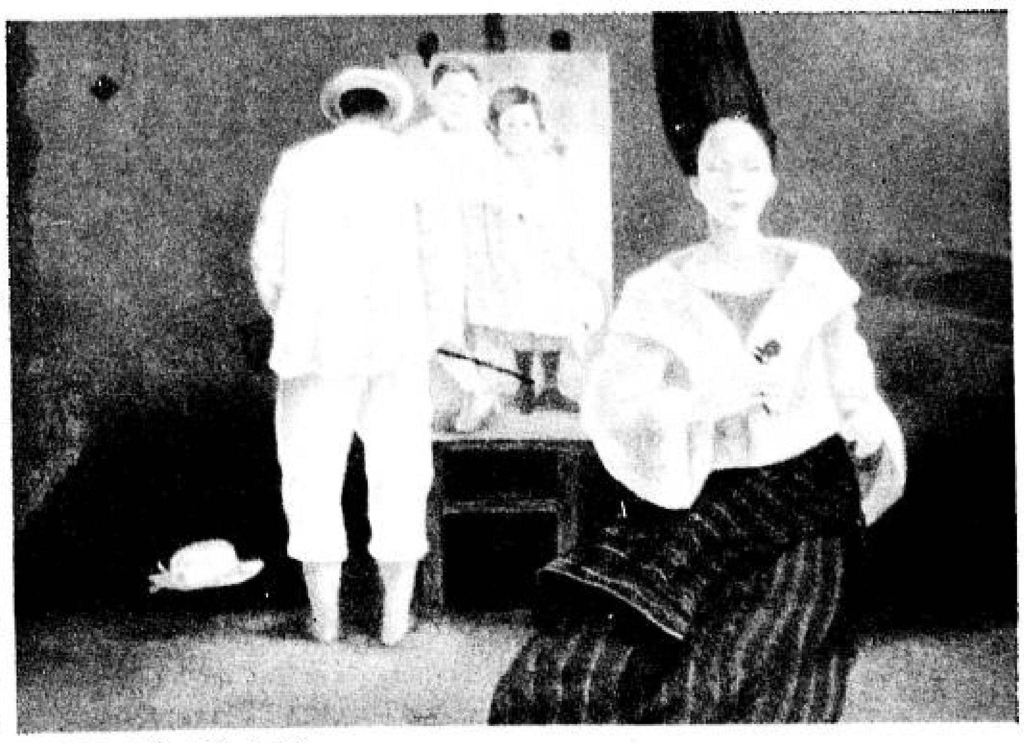




THE BOOK, "Jose Maria V. Zaragoza: Architecture for God, For Man," by Ruben D.F. Defeo and Ma. Lourdes Zaragoza-Banson, will be launched on Feb. 5 at 4 p.m., at the Press Café of the Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center. Published by ArtpostAsia, the book details the achievements of the builder of the Santo Domingo Church, Meralco Building and other landmarks. The book is available at Fully Booked.



"SA Piling ng Ina"



"ANG Pag-Ibig ni Maria III"

Jerry Morada has brought to light sociopolitical forces that shaped the Filipina in life

Evolving women

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

THE FEMALE psyche is a compelling material for the artist.

By situating the subject at the turn of the century, and juxtaposing her image with the female artistic ideal, artist Jerry Morada has brought to light the various sociopolitical forces that shaped the Filipina in life and reshaped, in turn, by art.

A product of the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts in Diliman, Morada began as an artist for Probe Productions Inc., producer of the award-winning show, "Probe Team."

Born in Pakil, Laguna, where he still resides, Morada was also into woodcarving, and was soon discovered by Galerie Joaquin's Jack Teotico.

Romantic image

Morada worked on standard subjects such as genre and portraiture, opting to draw Filipino women in turn-of-the-century apparel like the *baro't saya*. At that time, he wanted to bring out the physical appeal and romantic aspect of his character that was evolving into a powerful symbol of liberation.

In the new show, "Pag-ibig ni Maria" (at Galerie Joaquin, 2F, 371 P. Guevarra St. and Montessori Lane, Addition Hills, San Juan; 7239253, 7239418), Morada shifts his focus from the glamour of portraiture and sentimentality and presents women as characters of history and agents of social change. Gone are the stiff and contrived poses; instead dynamic and vibrant figures emerge caught in a never-ending whirl of gravitational mise-en-scene.

The artist has his women in the foreground, their eyes cast downward, while behind them looms the male figure.

Morada highlights the scapular, not unlike the talisman worn to ward off evil spirits, hanging, dangling or swinging by the figure's neck. This symbol of religious piety, worn by many pious Catholics, predominantly bright red or occasionally white or brown, is a fixture in his work.

Archive of symbols

In some paintings, the scapular serves to tie up two women, contrasting symbols of tradition and modernity. Other objects from Morada's rich archive of symbols are the jar from where a naked woman emerges, the more ubiquitous pedestal on which she stands and a chair, either empty or taken.

Morada turns more daring by including the face of a stallion in "The Call of Music," a symbol of virility, speed and industry. I

A proof of Morada's ambidexterity is his ability to capture the texture, color and craftsmanship of the turn-of-the-century apparel, with remarkably detailed diaphanous indigenous fabric like the *sinamay* or *jusi*.

The abstract quality of the composition is evident in the way the backdrop is richly conjured, as in "Lovers," where a pair of lovers emerges from an abstract wall, with bold splashes of colors, their bodies afloat. In "Love Triangle," a pair of lovers is shown entwined in a white sheet while another woman lies opposite them. While female liberation is paramount in these works, Morada incorporates other images of the female as lover, muse, nurturer of life, healer and chief protagonist.

E-mail the author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com

Art fora at Mag:Net

MAG:NET Gallery holds two art fora this week to celebrate its three years in existence. On Feb. 1, 3 p.m. at Mag:Net Gallery ABS-CBN, Ronaldo Achacoso, Ana Labrador and Carlo Tadiar talk about "Art Criticism Today." Ana Labrador moderates.

On Feb. 4, 3 p.m., at Mag:Net Katipunan, Ramon Lerma, Judy Sibayan, Gerardo Tan and Nestor Vinluan tackle the "State of Art Education Today," with Sibayan moderating.

An intensive question-and-answer session follows the fora. Contact Abbey, Jhennie or Shey at 9293191 or 4352631 or e-mail magnet@pldtdsl.com

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Beyond Mondrian

JES Evangelista with "Rectilinear Blue"

By Constantino C. Tejero

IN DEVELOPING theories about the horizontal-vertical axes, Piet Mondrian progressively limited himself to rectangular forms and ultimately reduced his art to "a new kind of rigorously geometrical abstraction," which he called Neo-Plasticism.

Through his kind of minimalism—banishing not only representation and three-dimensional picture-space but also "the curved line, sensuous qualities of texture and surface, and the sensuous appeal of color"—he had wanted his art to achieve expression of "an ideal of universal harmony."

It is to this we can refer the art of Jes Evangelista that we've seen in "Rectilinear," his third solo exhibit of 14 pieces in mixed media on canvas in Renaissance Gallery at the Artwalk, 4/L, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

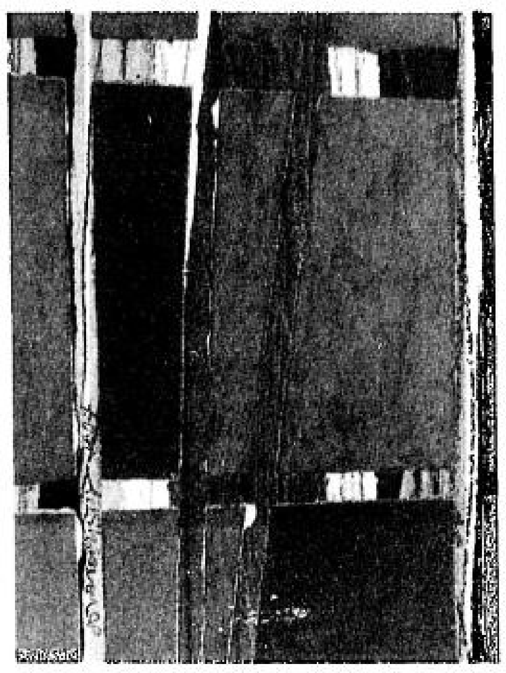
For some years now the artist has been almost obsessively painting strips of colors, although, he says, he was not aware of their resemblance to Mondrian's grid pattern until a colleague pointed it out to him.

His exhibit last year, "Square Lines," comprised of bands of colors forming stripes, plaid, checkers, latticework, or simply parallel lines. Now, in his latest exhibit, they have evolved into perpendicular forms resembling windows, doors, trellises, scaffolding.

It is more visually related to the construction art of Tony Twigg than to Mondrian's, though in some respect his and Twigg's works are direct antitheses. The gallery-goer can better appreciate this by also viewing Twigg's "No Borders," his newest constructions in black and white, until today in nearby Galleria Duemila.

Lines and colors

Twigg's art, of course, is more tactile, as it is really painted relief of timber. And though Evangelista's work is textured with glazed putty, it retains the flat surface of conventional painting.



"BEYOND the Blue," by Evangelista

Also, while he shows skill in the monochrome (see the color tones of "Rectilinear Blue"), his bands of vibrant hues (red, orange, yellow, violet, cobalt, turquoise in "Embracing White") starkly contrast with the muted monochrome of Twigg's framework forms.

The contrast with Mondrian is just as stark. Evangelista's color blends and tonality are far from Mondrian's pure color (restricted to the three primaries and the three achromatics), while his rough-edged forms, broad lines, geometric clutter and uneven paint application are farther still from Mondrian's fine lines and flat color planes.

By their titles, one would think they're simply studies in colors: "Beyond the Blue," "Content Yellow," "Bark Brown," "Surpassing Red."

Evangelista is not concerned with the perfect composition balance of Mondrian (who aimed to create "an objective art of discipline whose laws would somehow reflect the order of the universe"). Whereas Neo-Plasticism is reducing art to its simplest elements (straight lines and primary colors, Zen-like color field), he uses a complicated technique.

Evolving art

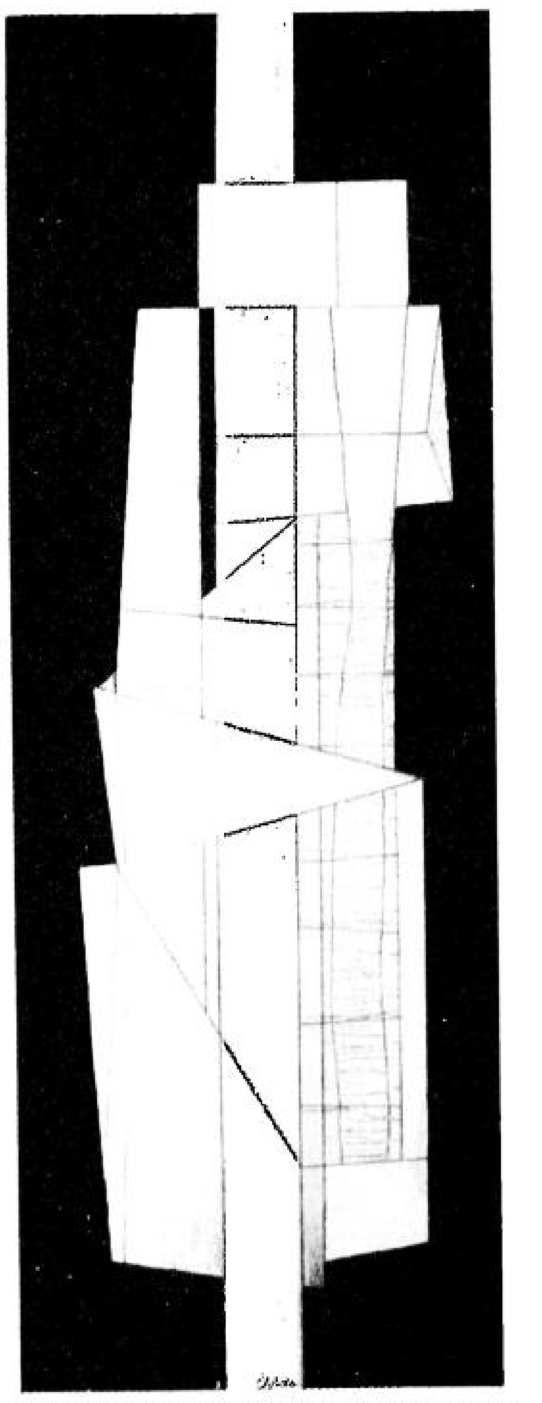
With oil, acrylic, colored pencil, craypas, chalk and putty, he creates his distinctive interplay of lines and colors by layering, using masking tape for stenciling effect. A 4 ft x 5 ft painting takes him about a week to finish.

The rectilinear forms that emerge, says the artist, have no references to doors or windows but are just pure geometric abstraction. He offers no theosophic meaning for them beyond the metaphor of evolving personality, layerings of traits and experiences interlapping with or obliterating and replacing one another.

Evangelista took up Fine Arts, major in Painting, in University of the Philippines. He cites among his favorites his UP mentors Roberto Chabet, Nestor Vinluan, Benjamin Cabangis, along with Van Gogh and Picasso.

Before embarking on his near-obsession with stripes and rectangles, however, he started with representational art, working as graphic artist for a company while churning out realist paintings of flowers, rocks, even ballet dancers, on commission.

When he was a student, he used to do Monet reproductions for his projects. That's as far as one can be from Mondrian.



"RECONSTRUCTED Crate" I, by Tony Twigg

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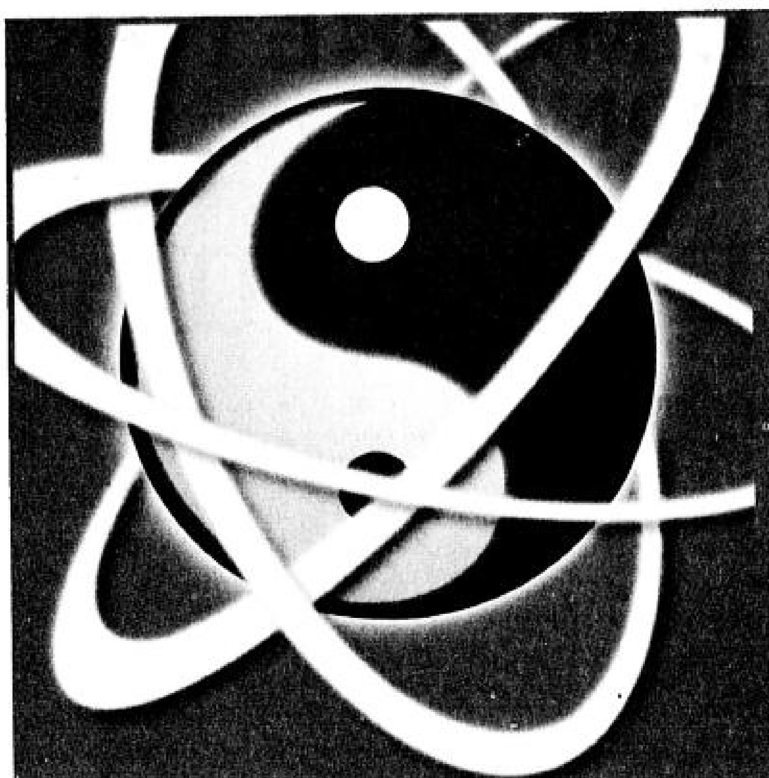
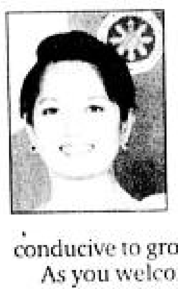


MARKETING CONVERGENCE



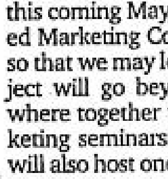
I WOULD like to convey my most cordial greetings to all the people behind the Philippine Marketing Association, Inc. as you welcome your new set of officers and mark your 51st Anniversary.

The Philippine Marketing Association has through the years contributed immensely to the growth of local trade and commerce. By raising the standard of excellence in marketing in the country, your help create a business environment conducive to growth and investments. Keep up the good work.

As you welcome your new set of officers, look forward to your group's vital participation in building a more vibrant and resurgent Philippine economy. Let us embrace the year with renewed optimism and vigor, as we embark on urgent changes to improve our people's quality of life.

Congratulations to your new officers, and mabuhay kayong lahat.

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines



THE PHILIPPINE Marketing Association now embarks on its 51st year as we look forward and prepare ourselves for the future of marketing. Our theme for this year focuses on Marketing Convergence.

Marketing convergence is the state where boundaries in marketing are brought down by market forces and developing technology, challenging the very essence of traditional marketing, and prompting marketers to be dynamic with the fast-paced change that is affecting every business. We in the Philippine Marketing Association, make it our advocacy to prepare Filipinos marketers for the inevitable convergence of marketing. We make it a point to advance the marketing profession through various projects and events this year, all with the objective of creating and developing world class Filipino marketers, ready to take on the fast-changing world.

This year, the Philippine Marketing Association will be at the forefront of Marketing Convergence. Through the Agora Awards, we will acknowledge people who have defied the traditional norms and pursued marketing convergence in their companies, thus strengthening their market position. In the National Marketing Convention this coming May, we will introduce companies that have spearheaded Marketing Convergence, and have become leaders in their field, so that we may learn from them. Our Marketing in Government project will go beyond Manila, and will venture towards key cities where together with our Chapters, we will provide a series of marketing seminars for government agencies and units. This year, we will also host one of the regional meetings of the Asia-Pacific Marketing Federation in Cebu, where key marketing officials from Asia will converge to discuss amongst ourselves marketing issues and trends.

Together with this year's distinguished crop of board of directors, I invite all members of the Philippine Marketing Association throughout the Philippines and Asia to join us as we embark on a journey of sowing the right seeds for the next 50 years. After Marketing Convergence, we are sure that we will move one step closer to our vision of becoming the Marketing Icon of the Philippines.

DONALD LIM
Incoming President
Philippine Marketing Association

AS THE year of the Marketing Renaissance draws to a close, let the bells ring for the outgoing 2004 Golden Year Board. You have clearly established the Philippine Marketing Association as The Icon in the marketing community.

And let the bells ring for the incoming 2005 Board. With your theme of Marketing Convergence, you continue our tradition in leading the marketing community with new thinking.

Mabuhay!

JOS ORTEGA
Immediate Past President
Philippine Marketing Association

NEW Year. New Leaders, New Beginnings.

On behalf of the Asia Pacific Marketing Federation (APFM), I would like to congratulate the Philippine Marketing Association as it welcomes year 2005 with the induction of its newly elected Board of Officers and Directors.

Philippine Marketing Association continues to thrive in the industry because of its formidable leaders, ably supported by its roster members. The association, which espouses marketing excellence in the profession, has become an indispensable player in the business sector. But Philippine Marketing Association goes beyond its borders. It continues to play a more pro-active role in the international marketing landscape by sustaining good relations and stronger partnership with its Asian counterparts, particularly the Asia Pacific Marketing Federation.

Philippine Marketing Association's year 2005 thematic peg "Marketing Convergence" is an apt call for another year of new beginnings. Marketing is a dynamic field that is constantly evolving. Conquering change remains a challenge. Today's marketing professionals must be innovative, steadfast in acquiring new knowledge and ready to conquer the challenges of change brought about by globalization. As an ally of Philippine Marketing Association, APMF remains committed to being a vital resource for information exchange on new technologies, prevailing trends and research that would bolster the growth of the marketing profession, not only in the Asia Pacific region, but also on a global scale.

May the marketing profession reap more success in 2005!

JOSE JESUS F. ROCES
President
Asia Pacific Marketing Federation

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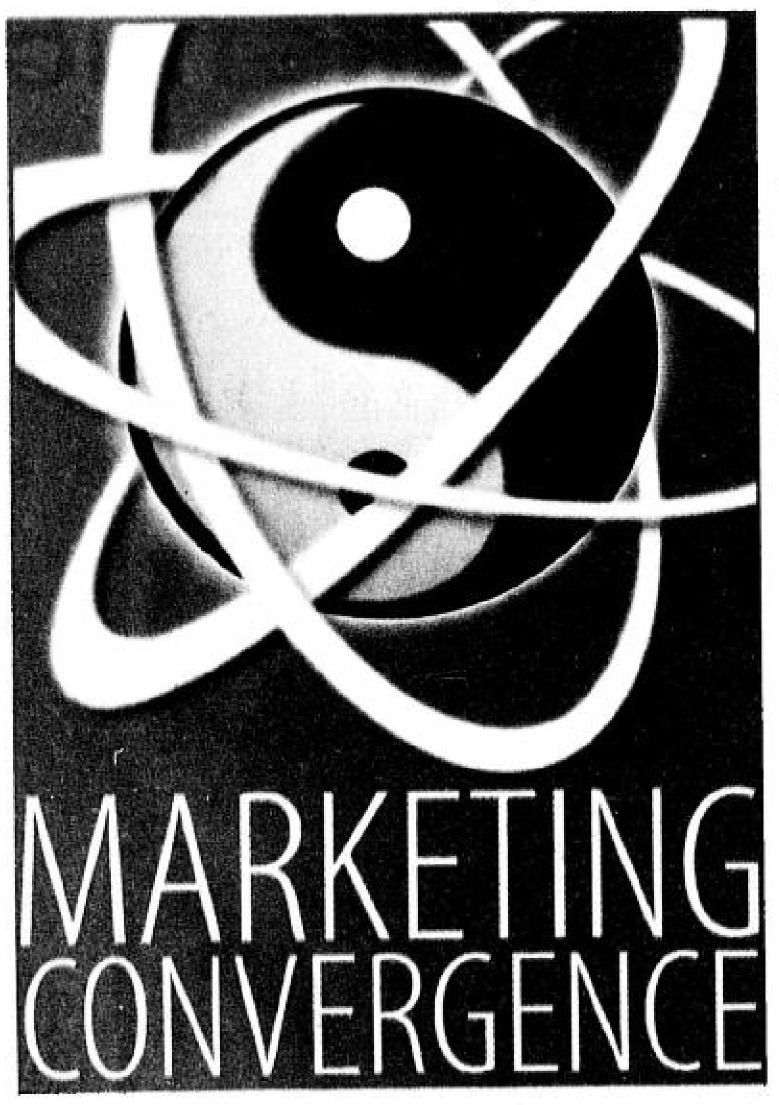
PHILIPPINE MARKETING ASSOCIATION

Market Convergence



This is the environment that marketers and advertisers face now and in the future. David Mercer describes this future: First, the future of humanity is, in general, no longer constrained by any significant shortage of resources. Second, that future is now being progressively determined by social decisions, taken not just by a few leaders but by millions of us taking billions of small decisions as part of our daily lives.

By Nick B. Fontanilla

THE DEFINING element of the 21st century is the empowerment of the individual. Empowerment of the individual has become a touchstone of the development of a country's civilization (Mercer, 1998). The individual, wherever that individual is, has the capability that before only social groups could perform.

This is the environment that marketers and advertisers face now and in the future. David Mercer describes this future: First, the future of humanity is, in general, no longer constrained by any significant shortage of resources. Second, that future is now being progressively determined by social decisions, taken not just by a few leaders but by millions of us taking billions of small decisions as part of our daily lives.

In this environment, a classless consuming sector emerges setting the stage for market convergence.

What is market convergence? To illustrate, let me cite three examples: the trend towards connectivity, the trend towards eating convenience, and the trend towards a shopping community.

Trend Towards Connectivity

By the end of 2004, the telecom industry expects the number of cell phone subscribers to increase to around 30 million. About ten years ago, that was less than one million. Fifteen years ago, that was less than 200,000. The vast majority of cell phone usage is prepaid.

These 30 million subscribers cut across all income classes and market profiles. Each one has the same goal - to be connected. Each one uses the same solution - a cell phone. Each one exhibits cost consciousness - by using SMS. Each one wants better control of usage - through the pre-paid plan. Each one has the same aspiration - to get a better, more modern cell phone unit. Amazingly, this market has converged.

Trend Towards Eating Convenience

The latest Family Income and Expenditures Survey, a survey that the National Statistics Office conducts every three years, reveals that more couples eat out and that expenditure for eating out has increased. This is expected considering our propensity to eat (about five times a day) and external conditions such as traffic and increasing cost of home cooking.

Synfood, a study conducted by M & S Sigma Dos in June 2003, gives us an indication as to which stores they frequent. This is in response to the question "when you feel like eating out, where do you usually go?" I will present only the top five

Rank	Brand	% Mention
1st	Jollibee	86
2nd	McDonald's	60
3rd	Kentucky Fried Chicken	25
4th	Chowking	24
5th	Greenwich	13

Source: PMA Agora Digest, Volume I, 2nd issue

Millions of these convenience eaters crowd the same places. Like the cell phone users, convenience eaters cut across all segments and profiles. This market, too, has converged.

The convenience eaters, regardless of income class and lifestyle classification, go to the same places, consume the same food and the same amount of food, crowd the same spots at about the same time and during the same days, grab the same bonuses and perks, sit side by side sometimes even sharing the same table, and demand the same level of service from the store crew.

This market has become undifferentiated. Major players try to differentiate. But as soon as one does, the elements of competition bring the market to a state of equilibrium.

Trend Towards A Shopping Community

While the crisis that started in 1997 took its toll on the economy, SM, Ayala, Robinsons and other major retailing giants continued building more retail spaces. What they built during this period added to what they already had before the crisis.

In 2000, I started partnering with an Indian IT company to offer IT solutions to the financial services industry. The company sent a young marketing executive to Manila. That was the first time he traveled overseas. On his first free day, he went around and was so awed by the size of the mall that he visited. He was referring to the Robinsons Mall in Manila. He commented that he had never seen anything like that in India.

The availability of retail spaces and the experience that goes with the space have created a mall culture. A study conducted by Dr. Leonardo Garcia of De La Salle University reveals a high frequency of usage among a cross-section of the consuming public.

Like the cell phone users and convenience eaters, mallers cut across all segments and profiles. They all go to malls and crowd popular shops for the same reasons -- to be entertained, to shop, and to eat/dine.

The above cases are indicative of converged markets. What is the principle of market convergence? Convergence of previously disjointed markets can be viewed as the erosion of boundaries that define and isolate industry specific knowledge where the cross elasticity that might be invoked to conveniently separate markets no longer holds and firms become more proximate in their technological platforms (Pennings and Puranam, 2001).

Markets	% Visiting the Mall at least once a week
Teenagers	66%
Young Adults	59%
Adults	67%
Total	64%

Source: PMA Agora Digest, Volume I, 1st Issue

What is the significance of the market convergence theory?

Thomas Friedman writes that people around the globe are pretty much pursuing the same goal: "the basic human desire for a better life; a life with more choices as to what to eat, what to wear, where to live, where to travel, how to work, what to read, what to write, and what to learn (Moore and Simon, 2000). In the process of pursuing the same goal and pursuing individual wants, people converge.

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Philippine Marketing Association Objectives

THE PRINCIPAL purposes of the Association are to develop and promote Marketing as a science and a profession guided principally by the universal principles of ethics, corporate citizenship and corporate social responsibility and to serve as a policy-making and recommendatory arm of the government of on Marketing-related issues.

Its other purposes are as stated in the Articles of Incorporation of the Association.

CREDO

We subscribe to the basic precept that our country's economic progress can be best achieved in a climate of free enterprise;

We endorse the concept that business and industry can best contribute to economic progress and social wellbeing through enlightened self interest;

We believe that this self interest, based on the concept of rightful profit, can in turn be best attained through total consumer orientation;

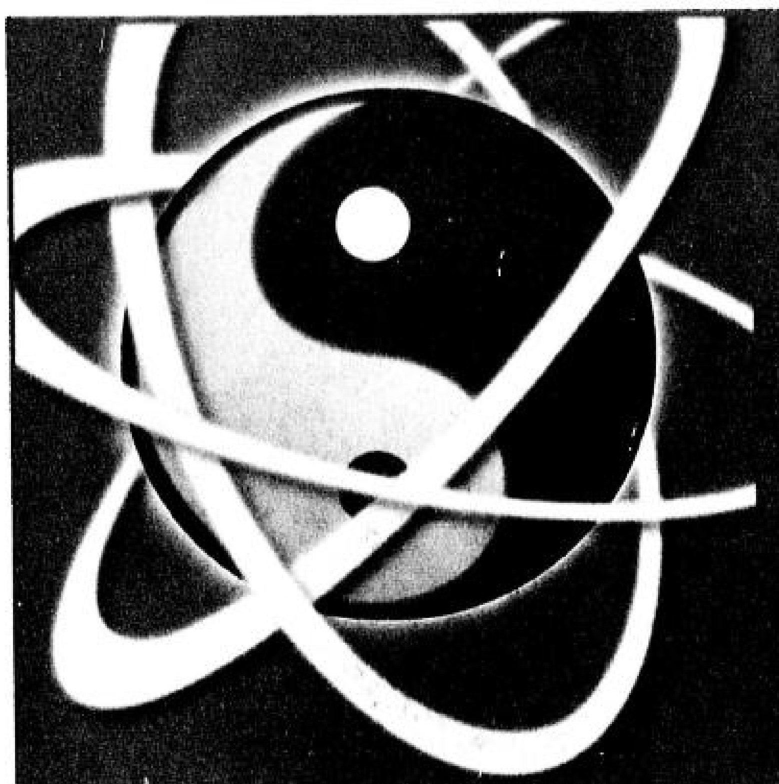
We are committed to the promotion and general acceptance of marketing as a professional endeavor, aware that to gain acceptance, marketing practitioners must adhere to a high code of ethics;

We shall endeavor to live by that code, and to wield individual and collective force to prevent and minimize malpractice;

We believe that integrity is the hallmark of an abiding faith in the eternal Almighty.

Sponsored by MICRODATA

PHILIPPINE MARKETING ASSOCIATION

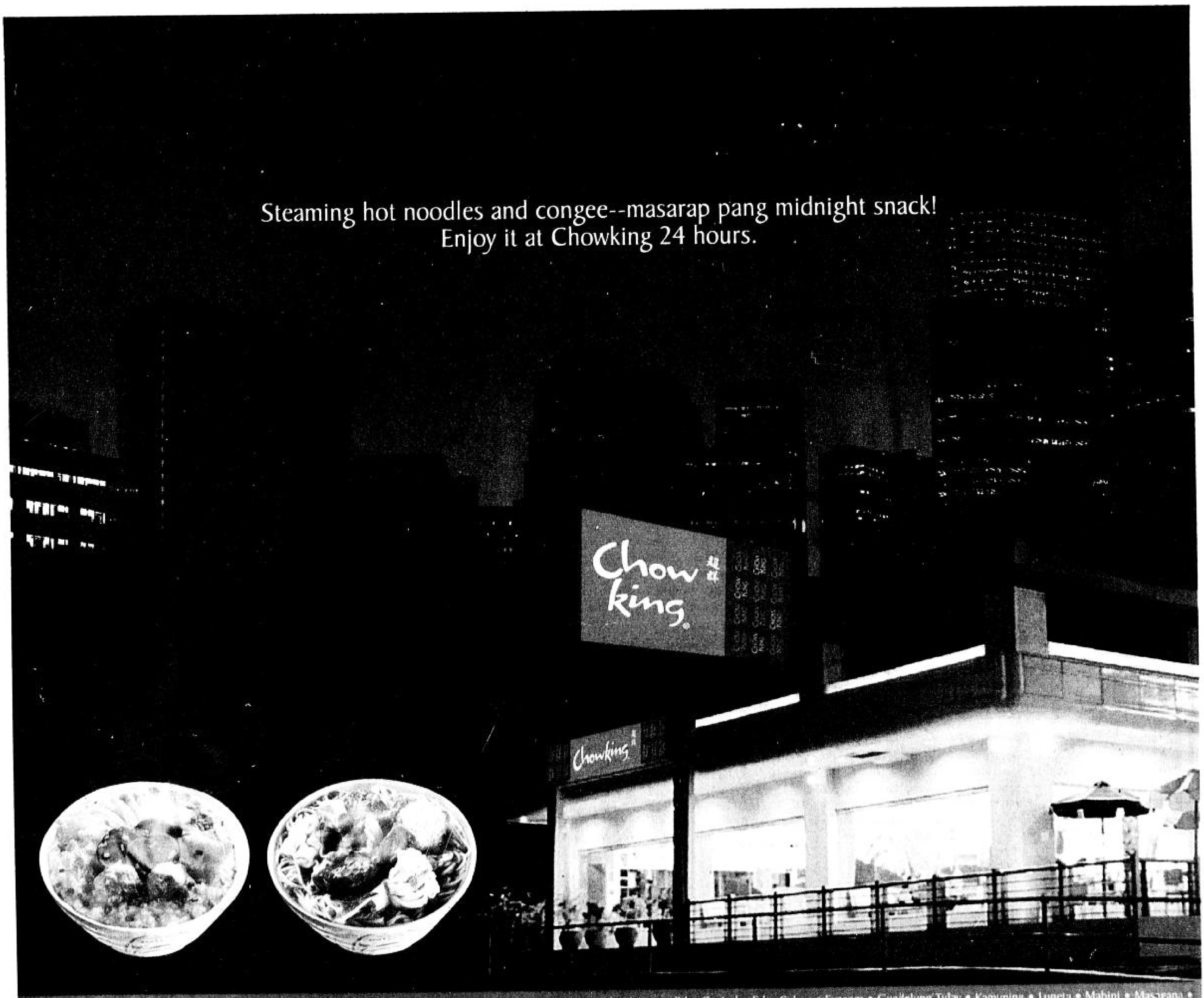


MARKETING CONVERGENCE

MARKETING Convergence is the state where boundaries in marketing are brought down by marketing forces and developing technology, challenging the very essence of traditional marketing, and prompting marketers to be dynamic with the fast-paced change that is affecting every business. It is the advocacy of the Philippine Marketing Association to prepare Filipino marketers for Marketing Convergence, and is therefore using it as the theme for its 51st year.

Marketing Convergence is symbolized by the scientific symbol of the Atom. In Greek, the atom means uncuttable or indivisible, the basic unit of matter. The time has already come where we recognize that everything in the world is the build up of the convergence of smaller bits and pieces. It is through these bits and pieces, more specifically known as the atom, that makes up every matter that exists. The discovery of the atom paved the way for modern scientific and technological thinking. The atom also describes the world we live in, and every marketer should learn to create that perfect symbiotic relationship with their organization, their competition, their clients and their suppliers, all in recognition that we are living in a new, digital world.

The nucleus is the central force of the atom and where all energy resides. The nucleus is represented by the traditional symbol of the Yin-Yang. The Yin-Yang represents two primal opposing elements of the universe. Yin and yang are in symbiosis, complementary and found in every aspect of life. This logo represents the epitome of Marketing Convergence: Traditional and Contemporary, Eastern and Western thought, exact opposites working together to create that perfect marketing equilibrium.


Steaming hot noodles and congee--masarap pang midnight snack!
Enjoy it at Chowking 24 hours.
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The World's First...

Renew Business Registration Anytime, Anywhere with GLOBE G CASH

First mobile business registration in the world

Innovations leader Globe Handyphone marks another milestone with the world's first-ever business registration renewal via mobile phone. From January 10 until midnight of January 31, 2005, busy entrepreneurs will enjoy the convenience of renewing their business registrations beyond working hours, thanks to G-Cash, Globe's new category of m-commerce service that transforms Globe subscribers' phones into mobile wallets.

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

BIR's exclusive collection agent for mobile registration renewal

With G-Cash, business owners are spared the hassle of spending precious work hours to go out and renew their business registrations. Now, processing their papers is as simple as a text that takes no less than a few seconds with the secure service of Globe G-Cash, leaving them with more time to attend to other business matters.

This service is made possible by Globe's partnership with the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR). The bureau exclusively nominated the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) as its official collection agent for this project, which follows on the heels of a successful Globe-BIR collaboration, the internationally acclaimed text promo, *Bayan I-txt Ang Resibo*, which facilitated the swift updating of the BIR tax database. G-Cash payments are expected to boost early renewal of business registrations as well as enhance the BIR's efficiency by minimizing paperwork and improving the quality of service by reducing the number of walk-ins at the regional district offices (RDOs).

Read on to find out about this innovative new service.

When will business registration renewal via G-Cash start?

Business registration via G-Cash will officially start on January 10 and will end at midnight of January 31, 2005. During this period, you may pay your registration and renewal anytime and anywhere because G-Cash payment is not confined to the regular office and banking hours.

Effective February 01, 2005, taxpayers will have to pay their business registration renewal directly with their respective revenue district offices.

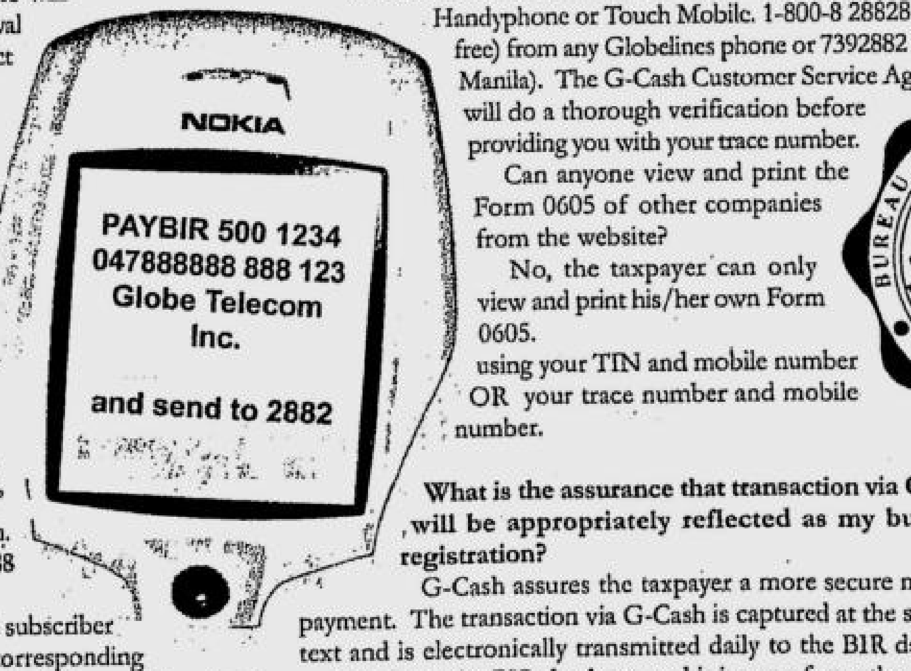
How do I pay my business registration renewal via G-Cash?

First, you must be a registered G-Cash subscriber (available only to Globe and Touch Mobile subscribers). As a G-Cash subscriber, you must have a minimum of P500 in your G-wallet to pay for your business registration fee.

Next, text "PAYBIR 500 <MPIN> <Tax Identification Number> <Taxpayer Branch Code> <Revenue District Office Code> <Registered Company Name>" and send to 2882. P1.00 per transaction.

Example: **PAYBIR 500 1234 047888888 888 123 Globe Telecom Inc.**

Once the transaction is completed, the subscriber will receive a confirmation message and corresponding trace number confirming the renewal of the said business registration. This will also be the corresponding BIR reference number.



PAYBIR 500 1234
047888888 888 123
Globe Telecom
Inc.

and send to 2882

What is a TIN? TPBC? RDO code?

TIN is defined as Tax Identification Number. It is the 9-digit number assigned by BIR to identify your company.

TPBC is defined as Taxpayer Branch Code. It is the last 3 digits of your Tax Identification Number (TIN).

RDO is defined as Revenue District Office Code. It is the 3-digit number starting from 000 to 123. It represents the Revenue District Office where your company is registered.

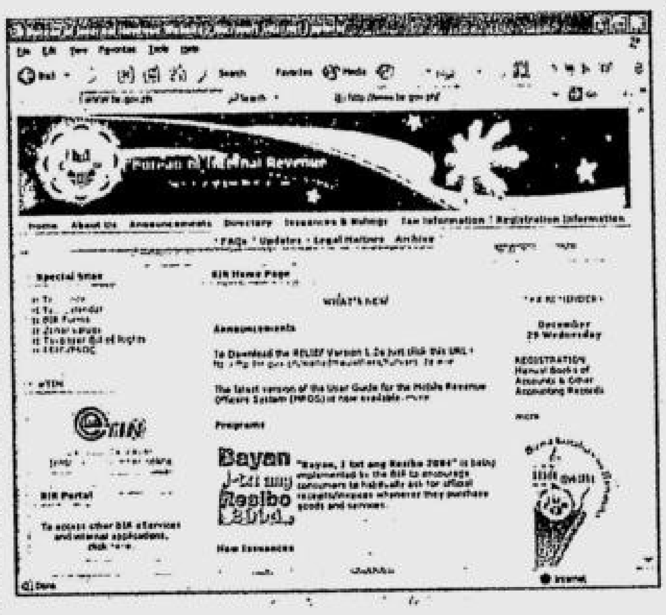
Do I need to file the Payment Form (Form 0605) separately?

No, you do not need to file your Payment Form (Form 0605) separately. This form will be available for printing from this website www.bir.gov.ph, 2 days after your G-Cash transaction.

All information provided by the taxpayer when paying G-Cash will be captured on this form.

How do I retrieve my Form 0605 from this website?

The taxpayer has two options to retrieve the Form 0605. One option is to log in using his/her TIN and mobile number. This is advisable for companies/taxpayers who maintain several branches. The succeeding screen will prompt the taxpayer to select the trace number of the transaction to retrieve the specific Form 0605 for that branch. The second option is to log in using his/her Trace Number and mobile number. The succeeding screen will bring the taxpayer directly to the specific Form 0605 represented by the trace number.



What is a trace number? What if I forgot the trace number?

The trace number is the confirmation number provided by Globe after you have completed your G-Cash transaction. This number will be printed on the lower portion of your Form 0605 together with the date of your G-Cash transaction.

In case you forgot your trace number, please call the G-Cash 24-Hour Hotline numbers: 2882 (toll-free) from your Globe Handyphone or Touch Mobile. 1-800-8 2882882 (toll free) from any Globelines phone or 7392882 (Metro Manila). The G-Cash Customer Service Agent will do a thorough verification before providing you with your trace number.

Can anyone view and print the Form 0605 of other companies from the website?

No, the taxpayer can only view and print his/her own Form 0605.

using your TIN and mobile number OR your trace number and mobile number.

What is the assurance that transaction via G-Cash will be appropriately reflected as my business registration?

G-Cash assures the taxpayer a more secure mode of payment. The transaction via G-Cash is captured at the speed of text and is electronically transmitted daily to the BIR database.

It updates the BIR database, and it is even faster than paying through the conventional channel.

What if I entered incorrect information when paying G-Cash?

To further ensure that only accurate information is captured, you will be immediately prompted in case incorrect information is inadvertently entered by the taxpayer such as TIN which should be a 9-digit number, TPBC should only be 3 digits while RDO should only contain numbers starting from 000 up to 123.

If, despite the verification, the taxpayer entered the wrong data, (example, incorrect 9-character TIN) your payment will still be considered as a valid transaction and will be forwarded to BIR. You may immediately call the BIR's 24/7 Contact Center at 981-8888 to report and request for the correction of information.

Note: You may be required to present some supporting documents.

Can I use any mobile phone or handset to pay for my business registration?

You may use any Globe or Touch Mobile phone to pay for your business registration so long as you enter the correct information about the company or business that you are registering such as the TIN, RDO, TPBC and Registered Company Name. However, when retrieving your Form 0605 from the website, make sure that you remember your TIN or trace number and the mobile phone number that you used when you transacted.

What is the telephone number of the BIR Contact Center?

You may call BIR's 24-hour Contact Center at 981-8888.

Who can avail of this service?

This service is available to all Globe and Touch Mobile subscribers. Anyone who wishes to avail of this service must be a registered G-Cash subscriber.

After registration, the subscriber/taxpayer may convert cash to electronic cash values, 'G-Cash,' to pay for the Annual Business Registration Fee.

Payment via G-Cash for 2005 Business Registration is accepted for corporate and individual taxpayers.

What will I receive to confirm my payment?

You will receive an SMS advisory with a corresponding trace number. You may also view and print the corresponding BIR Payment Form 0605 at 2 days after date of transaction.

How do I get a copy of my BIR Payment Form 0605?

Visit the BIR portal at www.bir.gov.ph and click on the PAYBIR link. Enter the trace number or your TIN and mobile number and click on "submit". The BIR Payment Form 0605 will be displayed with the corresponding information. Click on the print button to print.

What if I submitted an amount other than P500?

If you submitted an amount greater than P500, you may proceed to your RDO to file for your claim for a *tax credit refund*. If the amount submitted is lower, you may settle the balance separately but a corresponding penalty may be assessed if you settle beyond the prescribed registration period.

Globe G-Cash: An Outstanding Pinoy "First"

Right from the start, Globe Telecom has always been a leader in pioneering innovative services that enrich Filipinos' lives. From expanding the potential of the mobile phone as a communication and entertainment tool by introducing text messaging, personalized services, more varied reloading options and other conveniences, Globe has gone beyond connectivity to transform the cellphone into a mobile wallet and a reliable means of commerce, with the introduction of G-Cash, the first wireless and cardless m-commerce solution in the world.

More and more people are using G-Cash

G-Cash is a revolutionary service category that allows the subscriber to send and receive cash values, pay for purchases, and send remittances – all through text. In the two and a half months since it was launched, the number of G-Cash subscribers has already reached more than 200,000. An unprecedented total cash value of more than P70 million is currently circulating in the form of G-Cash.

The many firsts of G-Cash partnership

First in payment innovation

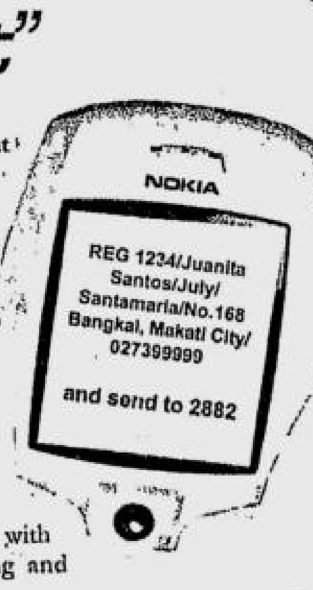
To meet the diverse needs of its subscribers, G-Cash has introduced many other "firsts" that enable Filipinos to achieve a better quality of life. Through strategic partnerships with major commercial establishments, it has improved our access to key products and services – being the first to provide a purely SMS-based means of payment for food, both in-store and food deliveries (from Jollibee, Burger King, Shakey's, and Max's), medicine (at Mercury Drug and Mansons Drug), and school and office supplies (at National Bookstore, Fully Booked and Bibliarch). Other services are also covered, such as marine transportation ticket reservation (Super Ferry), hotel reservations (Westin Philippine Plaza), and entertainment (myAyala SureSeats M-Pass). At the most basic level, G-Cash can be used to send and receive money person-to-person for all the common transactions that are typically done with cash, like giving *baon* or gifts to loved ones and to make payments.

G-Cash helps Pinoy entrepreneurs

G-Cash has paved the way to uplift the economic conditions of many Pinoys. Through a tie-up with the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines, G-Cash will enable the pilot of the first SMS-based microfinance effort. Small entrepreneurs in the provinces will be able to pay for loans availed from rural banks more quickly and easily, by sending their payments in the form of G-Cash. By linking up with the Bureau of Internal Revenue, G-Cash has also made it possible for owners of businesses to renew their registration and licenses. This marks a milestone in the use of mobile communication technology to facilitate financial transactions with the government, being the first of its kind in the world.

The first time you can donate at the speed of text

Even more importantly, G-Cash makes it possible and easy for Pinoys to do their share in reaching out to those in need. G-Cash is the first mobile commerce service that enables subscribers to extend assistance to victims of recent calamities, such as the tsunami in Asia and typhoons in the Philippines, by texting in their donations to the Red Cross and UNICEF. Supporting these humanitarian efforts is in line with Globe's overall vision of uniting and strengthening the nation.



REG 1234/Juanita Santos/July/ Santamaria/No.168 Bangkal, Makati City/ 027399999

and send to 2882

G-Cash has truly emerged as a convenient, safe, and reliable alternative to many transactions that are normally done using cash. It has opened up more exciting and empowering possibilities for Filipinos everywhere. Pinoys can really be proud of this groundbreaking service, which is set to blaze even more trails in the year ahead.

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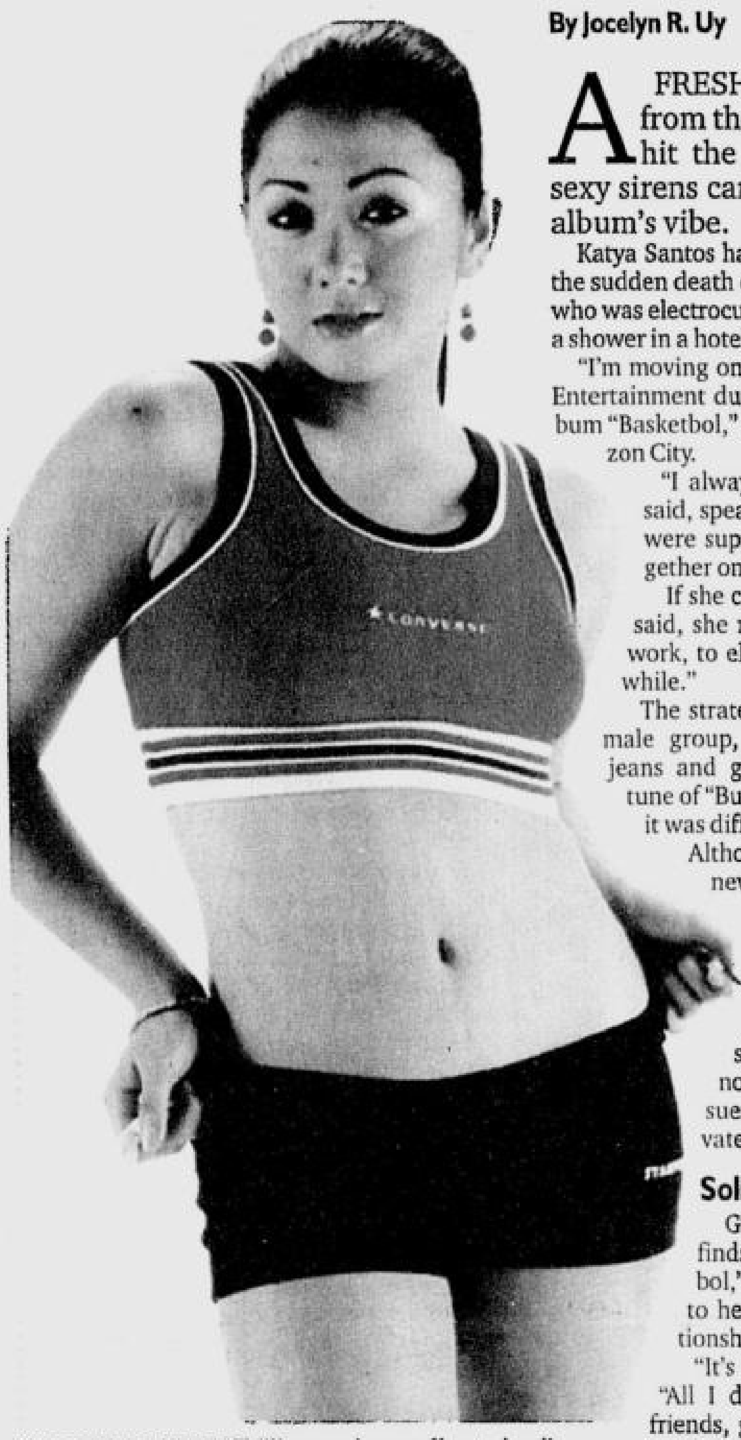
‘IT’S HARD TO FORGET’

Katya, Gwen still grieving

By Jocelyn R. Uy



“BASKETBOL” BEAT. “I’m moving on, I’m trying,” says Katya (left). “I always need someone with me,” and music is not enough.

A FRESH batch of cheery songs from the Viva Hot Babes recently hit the market, but two of the sexy sirens can’t seem to catch the new album’s vibe.

Katya Santos has yet to overcome her grief over the sudden death of her boyfriend Tonton Alcayde, who was electrocuted two months ago while taking a shower in a hotel in Mindoro.

“I’m moving on ... I’m trying,” she told INQUIRER Entertainment during the recent launch of the album “Basketbol,” at the Metro Concert Bar in Quezon City.

“I always need someone with me,” she said, speaking in Filipino. She and Tonton were supposed to celebrate two years together on Feb. 17, Katya added.

If she can’t have friends around her, she said, she makes sure she is occupied with work, to elude the sadness “even for just a while.”

The strategy seems to work. As the all-female group, in their signature tight-fitting jeans and glittering bustier, swayed to the tune of “Bulaklak” and “Kikay” at the launch, it was difficult to discern Katya’s grief.

Although she already has a handful of new suitors—one is from show biz, she said, but did not identify him—Katya figured she would need another year to let anyone new into her heart.

She was quick to add that she’d rather have someone who’s not from show biz. “I don’t like issues. I don’t like rumors. I want a private person,” she said.

Solace in songs

Gwen Garci, on the other hand, finds solace in the songs from “Basketbol,” especially when her mind drifts to her recently ended three-year relationship with a non-show biz boyfriend.

“It’s hard to forget,” Gwen explained. “All I do right now [is] ... talk to my friends, go out with them, go to the mall and shop [so I don’t have to think of him]. Still it hurts. When I hear love songs, I just cry.”

Although there are rumors linking her to Borgy Manotoc, Gwen insisted that it’s still an effort for her to smile and perform. But she resolved to henceforth make career her top priority.

Aside from the carrier single “Basketbol,” the album has 11 other tracks: “Cola-Cola Bodies,” “Mamang Gwapo,” “Malaking Lalaki,” “Pag-ibig Lang ang Kailangan,” “Ooh-Ah-Ah,” “Oops-Ay!,” “Ang Lalaki,” “Batuta ng Pulis,” “Hotbabes” and the hit songs “Bulaklak” and “Kikay.”

Said Jennifer Lee, who is half-Korean and half-Filipino: “All 12 songs are bouncy. Everyone is sure to like them.” The 20-year-old Hot Babe just came back from a six-day promo tour of Korea during which, she said, her Korean handlers were offered acting projects for her. “They said they would let me study the language for three months. But I am not sure that’s gonna happen because I am under [contract with] Viva Entertainment. They may have to buy my contract.”

Asked if she had to choose between being a Hot Babe and a promising career in Korea, Jennifer’s answer was swift. She’s rather stay because “it’s more fun” here, she said, but she wouldn’t mind giving “that opportunity” a try.

High hopes for third

Needless to say, the Hot Babes hope “Basketbol,” their third album, pulls the same feat that the first two ones did, maybe even do better.

“Bulaklak,” and “Kikay” had three tracks each. “Bulaklak” went platinum, Jennifer noted.

The Hot Babes—the eight other members are Andrea Del Rosario, Jen Rosendahl, Asia Agcaoili, Ella V., Myles Hernandez, Katrina Gonzales, Hazel Cabrera and JC Parker—are currently on a mall tour for “Basketbol.” They were in Ever Ortigas last Saturday, and will be in Market Market on Feb. 11, Target Mall in Tarlac on Feb. 19, and Metrowalk on Feb. 25.

Gwen Garci, Jaycee Parker, Katya Santos and Ella V. are also starring with Epy Quizon in a movie-VCD entitled “Boso,” directed by Jon Red.

Eight of the 11 Viva Hot Babes were present during the “Basketbol” launch. Andrea was said to be in Japan, JC Parker in Dubai, and Hazel Cabrera in Cebu.

“Basketbol” was produced and is being distributed by Viva Records in CDs and cassettes. It is available in all major record stores and outlets nationwide.

FOR GWEN, however, music helps to ease the pain. “When I hear love songs, I just cry,” she says.

Diether, Kristine: Did they, didn’t they?

SHOW TIME

SO, did they or didn’t they tie the knot in real life?

Despite the two stars themselves keeping mum about the real score between them, ABS-CBN invites fans of Diether Ocampo and Kristine Hermosa to read between the lines in the network’s latest prime time teleserye, “Til Death Do Us Part,” starting tonight, Jan. 31.

“Til Death Do Us Part” marks the awaited return to the teleserye genre of both Diether and Kristine. Kristine has not made a teleserye appearance since headlining the record-breaking finale of “Sana’y Wala Nang Wakas.”

Diether also hasn’t been seen in a teleserye since “Marina” ended in November.

How do you know if the person you’re with is the right person for you? That’s the question facing Ysabel (Kristine) and Manuel (Diether), friends who suddenly come to realize that they might be in love with each other. But there are problems—not the least of which is the fact that they are involved with other people. But will Ysabel and Manuel manage to find happiness despite their great differences and even bigger fears about commitment?

This light, modern love story also stars such favorites as Nova Villa, Anita Linda, Berting Labra, Dominic Ochoa, Shaina Magdayao, John Lapus, Asia Agcaoili, Reggie Curley, Bonggoy Manahan and Tessie Villarama.

John-D Lazatin, the director of Diether and Kristine’s segment in the hit movie “Bcuz of U,” makes a return engagement with the couple as the director of “Til Death Do Us Part,” with Andoy Ranay as second-unit director.

Richard Reynante is the creative manager, Agnes Gagilonia-Uligan is the head writer and Keiko A. Aquino is the series writer.

The production staff is headed by series production director Cathy Ochoa-Perez and executive producer Darnel Joy Villaflor. ABS-CBN Senior VP for TV Cory V. Vidanes completes the lead production team.

Fall in love with Kristine and Diether’s refreshing take on modern love with “Til Death Do Us Part,” as it makes its prime time premiere this Monday, Jan. 31 only on ABS-CBN.

READ their lips in this “Till Death Do Us Part” moment.

After producing ‘serious’ movies, GMA Films brings light love story

“LET THE Love Begin” from GMA Films, opens on Feb. 9 and will still be showing on Valentine’s Day, Feb. 14, and beyond.

It stars GMA Network’s homegrown stars—Richard Gutierrez and Angel Locsin, Mark Herras and Jennylyn Mercado.

Richard is fast becoming the country’s biggest heartthrob, while Angel is the newest “crush *ng bayan*.” Mark and Jennylyn are the StarStruck champions, and are said to be lovestruck themselves off screen.

The movie co-stars Gloria Romero, Tonton Gutierrez, Bearwin Meily, Tuesday Vargas, Polo Ravales, Nanette Inventor, Geoff Rodriguez, and Paolo Contis in a special role. It is directed by Mac Alejandre from a script by RJ Nuevas and Suzette Doctolero. Annette Gozon is executive producer.

Richard’s character is orphaned and works as janitor in high school in exchange for a night-class scholarship. Poor but bright, he grew up in the care of his grandmother (Gloria) who sells candies outside a church.

Angel plays a rich and spoiled girl more interested in gimmicks than studies. Motherless, Angel grew up with her father (Tonton) and surrogate mother (Nanette).

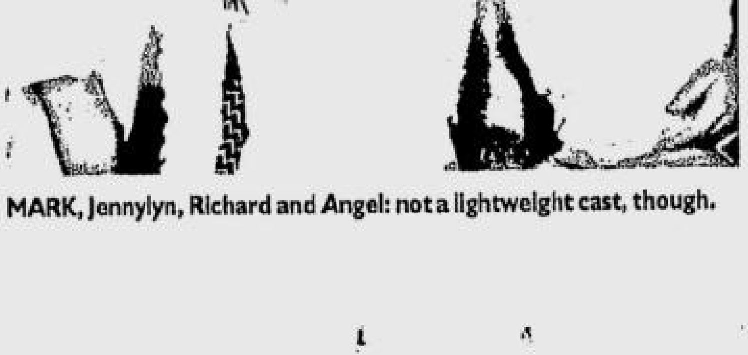
Richard is in love with Angel but is tongue-tied in the presence of the girl of his dream.

Mark and Jennylyn are Richard’s friends who urge him to come out in the open and express his love for Angel. Jennylyn herself is in love with Mark, but he ignores the tomboyish Jennylyn and only has eyes for other girls.

They go their separate ways after college—only to meet again in the corporate world. Richard works as head janitor in a company owned by Angel’s family.

GMA Films’ last movie was

AFTER/2



MARK, Jennylyn, Richard and Angel: not a lightweight cast, though.

‘Sis’ grand rally at Liwasang Bonifacio today / page 3

Pop rock legend performs greatest hits / page 4

JENNIFER GARNER
ELEKTRA
BORN TO FIGHT. TRAINED TO KILL.
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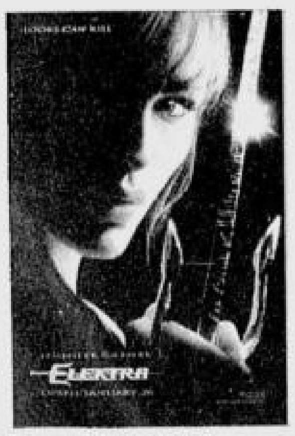
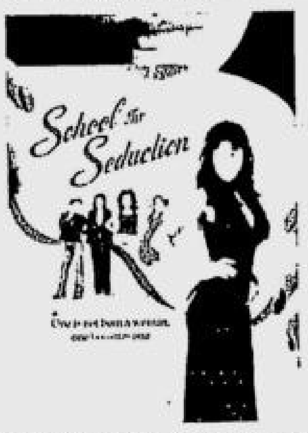


ELEKTRA
MTRCB RATING: PG13

Now Showing at:

SM Megamall • Manila • North Edsa • Sta. Mesa • Southmall Fairview • Sucat • Bicutan



SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION
MTRCB RATING: R13

Now Showing at:

SM Megamall • Manila Fairview • Sta. Mesa Southmall

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2 MEET THE FOCKERS

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5 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE
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7 RAISE YOUR VOICE
8 MAD HOUSE
9 OCEAN'S TWELVE
10 ELEKTRA
11 SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION
12 UNO

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2 OCEAN'S TWELVE
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4 BLADE TRINITY
5 MEET THE FOCKERS
6 ELEKTRA
7 ELEKTRA
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9 UNO
10 SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION
11 HONEY
12 MAD HOUSE

sm city manila
1 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE
2 MEET THE FOCKERS
3 WHITE NOISE
4 ELEKTRA
5 OCEAN'S TWELVE
6 ELEKTRA
7 SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION
8 RAISE YOUR VOICE
9 KUNG FU HUSTLE
10 BLADE TRINITY
11 SALSA (AN SM CINEMA EXCLUSIVE)
12 MAD HOUSE

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2 MEET THE FOCKERS
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5 ELEKTRA
6 SALSA (AN SM CINEMA EXCLUSIVE)
7 KUNG FU HUSTLE
8 SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION
9 OCEAN'S TWELVE
10 WHITE NOISE

sm city southmall
1 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE
2 KUNG FU HUSTLE
3 ELEKTRA
4 MEET THE FOCKERS
5 MAD HOUSE
6 UNO
7 HAYOP SA PORMA, HAYOP SA GANDA
8 BLADE TRINITY
9 OCEAN'S TWELVE
10 SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION

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1 BLADE TRINITY
2 KUNG FU HUSTLE
3 HAYOP SA PORMA, HAYOP SA GANDA
4 OCEAN'S TWELVE
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6 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE
7 MEET THE FOCKERS
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4 RESERVED

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4 WHITE NOISE

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2 UNO
3 MAD HOUSE
4 MEET THE FOCKERS

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VINCENT LECOEUR
CHRISTIANNE GOUT
Sexy, Hot, Exciting Salsa

MTRCB Rating: PG13

AN SM CINEMA EXCLUSIVE!

SALSA

"The girls like them chocolate brown". Remi Bonnet, a brilliant performer of Chopin, outrages his family and his teacher when he gives up an international career to play the music he has loved- Cuban music. In a city where most undocumented aliens want to become French, Remi Bonnet deliberately takes on the identity, accent and dark complexion of Felipe, his Cuban friend in order to blend into the Paris latino community and to teach Salsa dancing at the Casa Cubana...this is where he meets Nathalie, a shy girl who becomes a bomb on the dance floor.

TODAY
SM MANILA • STA. MESA

Get started with the "Salsa Fever" as it heats up SM Cinemas on January 19!

Melodrama's best, most moving as 'Saang Sulok ng Langit' starts

"KOMIKS" DRAMA. Jennifer Sevilla (fourth from left) and husband Jay Manalo smile through their tears and sorrows as they raise Maxene Magalone (third from left) and their other children.

TAPE Inc., makers of daytime hits like "Eat...Bulaga!," "Leya," "Walang Hanggan," "Hawak Ko ang Langit" and "Ikaw sa Puso Ko," have produced a melodrama that will have viewers reaching for tissues and shedding tears of sadness and joy with their new offering, "Saang Sulok ng Langit."

Featuring a cast of seasoned veterans and eye-catching new comers, "Saang Sulok ng Langit" premieres at 3 p.m. today after "Daisy Siete" on GMA 7.

"Saang Sulok ng Langit" begins in 1985. Jennifer Sevilla as Alona, a poor provincial girl, is in love with Raymond Bagatsing, the wealthy Vergel. But Vergel is forced to marry the saucy Juliana, played by Alicia Mayer. Alona, pregnant with Vergel's child, leaves for Manila after she finds out that Vergel and Juliana have flown to the United States to marry.

Years later, fate and tragedy will conspire to reunite Alona and Vergel and tear them apart just as quickly. As if she isn't unlucky enough, even Alona's children will go through misery and heartbreak for most of their lives.

When Alona is presumed dead in a sea tragedy, her eldest child, Gemma (Maxene Magalona) who is actually Alona's daughter by Vergel, will be forced to give up her two younger sisters and brother because she's too young to take care of them.

Gemma's heart-tugging journey through life will be serialized in "Saang Sulok Ng Langit."

Oyo Boy Sotto stars as the one bright spot in Gemma's life, while Jay Manalo makes a guest appearance as the man who marries Alona after Vergel leaves her.

"Saang Sulok ng Langit" is a melodrama that brings back the best and most moving elements of classics like "All Mine to Give" and the golden age of Pinoy *komiks* of yesteryears.

The soap is written by RJ Nuevas and directed by Ruel Bayani. It begins today on Channel 7.

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DID YOU KNOW...

Piolo Pascual, the star of Star Cinema's romantic film "Dreamboy," said he dreamed of becoming a TV news reporter when he was younger. He said that when he was alone, he practiced on-cam lines such as, "'*Ito po si* Piolo Pascual *para sa* 'TV Patrol.' "I could still do that if 'TV Patrol' would let me," Piolo told INQUIRER Entertainment, his eyes twinkling.

After producing 'serious' movies...

From page 1

"Deathrow," directed by Joel Lamangan and an entry in the 2000 Metro Manila Film Festival. It also produced "Jose Rizal," "Sa Pusod ng Dagat," and "Muro Ami," all by Marilou Diaz-Abaya.

After those landmark films, GMA Films comes up with a light love story, with a touch of comedy and drama.

"Let the Love Begin" is line-produced by Manny Valera, with Angelie Castrence as associate producer, Soc Jose as production manager, Regiben Romana as director of photography, and Edgar Martin Littaua as production designer.

'Sis' holds live morning party at Liwasang Bonifacio

SHOW TIME

GMA's No. 1 morning show, "Sis," invites everyone to join its grand rally as the program invades Liwasang Bonifacio in the heart of Manila this morning—live!

"Sis" has a lot of surprises in store for the viewers and those who will join the live celebration. Topping the list is the revelation in its newest contest, "Lipad... Darna Liitl," on who will play Darna in GMA's upcoming series. All details about the search will be revealed today.

A number of stars will party with the crowd in Liwasang Bonifacio. Leading the pack is the popular band Aegis, and the fun group K and the Boxers.

The Sexbomb Dancers will engage the crowd in non-stop dancing.

Pekto and John Feir will bring in the laughter as they do their famous Shoeshine and Tuliana Palermo comic act.

Making the show even more momentous is the presence of Philippine show business' one and only Master Showman, *Kuya* Germs.

"Sis" will not be complete without the energetic Abztract Dancers and Tess Bomb, Betty and Osang, who will roam the streets of Manila for the show's live greetings portion, "SISon Greetings."

Funny, sexy lessons in 'School for Seduction'

THE HUMDRUM lives of four women are transformed by the arrival of an Italian femme fatale, Sophia Rosselini (played by Kelly Brook), who runs a "School for Seduction," where she teaches them how to be seductive, sexy and in control.

Initially the lessons in seduction are great fun as the four women are unleashed on their unsuspecting partners with comic, at times uncomfortable, results. However, they are all shattered with the arrival of Sophia's estranged husband (Jake Canuso) and a shocking revelation unfolds.

The four women are Clare (Deervia Kirwan), who's in direct competition for her husband's attention with a red Alfa Romeo Spider; Irene (Margi Clarke), whose husband spends more time thinking of his fish-and-chip shop than her, and whose handsome son is being seduced by a friend; Emily (Kelly Brook), a single mother trying to balance two jobs and raising an 11-year-old son and at the same time warding off a supervisor; and Donna (Jessica Johnson), Kelly's younger sister, an ambitious and hot-headed supermart sales clerk who only has eyes for Irene's handsome son.

"School for Seduction" is released in the Philippines by Megavision.

SEX TIPS. Kelly Brook learns a lesson in "School."

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MEET THE FOCKERS PG13 1:45,4:10,6:35,9:00	IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:15	ELEKTRA PG13 11:40,1:50,4:00, 6:10,8:20,10:30

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ITS ALL ABOUT LOVE
1:50 4:10 6:30 9:00

WHITE NOISE
2:00 4:20 6:40 9:00

KUNG FU HUSTLE
1:50 4:10 6:30 8:50

OCEAN'S TWELVE
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1 Dolby ELEKTRA 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30
2 SDDS MEET THE FOCKERS 1:05 3:25 5:45 8:15
3 dts BLADE: TRINITY 11:30 1:50 4:10 6:30 8:50
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3 ELEKTRA 11:45, 2:25, 5:05 7:45, 10:25 PG-13
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③ ITS ALL ABOUT LOVE FS 12:20PM, 2:45PM, 5:10PM, 7:35PM, LMF 10:00PM (PG-13)
④ MEET THE FOCKERS FS 12:00PM, 2:30PM, 5:00PM, 7:30PM, LMF 10:00PM (PG - 13)

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2 MEET THE FOCKERS 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00	7 WHITE NOISE 12:20 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40
3 SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION 10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00	8 KUNG FU HUSTLE 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
4 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	9 BLADE TRINITY 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
5 ELEKTRA 11:30 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30	10 MADHOUSE 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 ELEKTRA	10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
2 WHITE NOISE 10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:50	5 SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION 10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
3 MEET THE FOCKERS 10:20 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50	6 BLADE TRINITY 10:20 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
4 RESERVE	7 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE 10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193/99 • 682-8280

1 SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION 11:10 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10	5 MEET THE FOCKERS 11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 8:30 10:30
2 ELEKTRA 10:10 12:45 3:20 5:55 8:30	6 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:50 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 8:45 10:30
3 MADHOUSE 11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10	7 ELEKTRA 12:10 2:45 5:20 7:55 10:30
4 WHITE NOISE 11:10 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10	8 BLADE TRINITY 11:50 2:30 5:10 7:50 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229/31

1 ELEKTRA 3:20 5:55 8:30	5 MEET THE FOCKERS 11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 8:55
2 OCEAN'S TWELVE 11:50 2:40 5:30 8:25	6 SCHOOL FOR SEDUCTION 11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:25
3 MADHOUSE 11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 8:55	7 TWO BROTHERS 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00
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2 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE 11:40 2:00 4:20 6:40 9:00	4 RAISE YOUR VOICE

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1 RAISE YOUR VOICE 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30	3 WHITE NOISE 11:30 1:45 4:00 6:15 8:30
2 KUNG FU HUSTLE 11:30 1:45 4:00 6:15 8:30	4 SAPLOT 11:20 1:10 3:00 4:50 6:40 8:30

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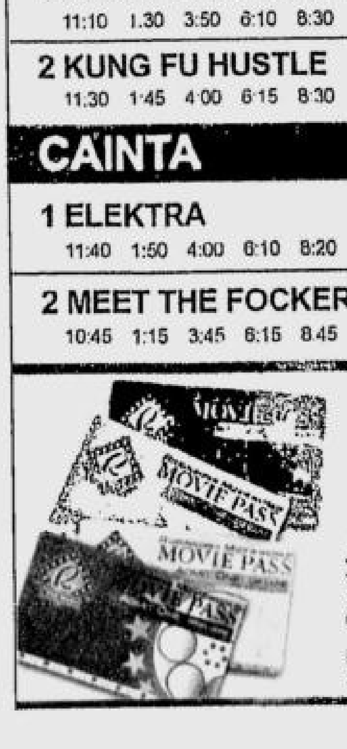
1 ELEKTRA 11:40 1:50 4:00 6:10 8:20	3 WHITE NOISE 12:45 3:15 5:45 6:15
2 MEET THE FOCKERS 10:45 1:15 3:45 6:15 8:45	4 BLADE TRINITY 12:50 3:30 6:10 8:50



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Pop rock legend performs greatest hits

SHOW TIME

DESPITE the popularity of R&B, hip hop and alternative music, Filipinos have not forgotten one musical movement that was big in the '70s—pop rock.

On Feb. 12, 13 and 14, Asian Events brings on the nostalgia by presenting the legendary act America, one of the biggest exponents of the genre.

The series, "America's Greatest Hits: Live at the NBC Tent," is presented by Smart Gold "Simply the Good Life" and Mido Swiss Watches and co-presented by Philippine Airlines and Montre. It will be held at the NBC Tent and will feature timeless favorites by the act comprised of Dewey Bunnel and Gerry Beckley.

Among these are "A Horse with No Name," "Tin Man," "Ventura Highway," "You Can Do Magic," "All My Life," "I Need You," "Sister Golden Hair," "Muskrat Love," "Daisy Jane," "Inspector Mills," among so many others.

Over 28 years, America released 14 full-length studio albums, nearly 200 songs—17 of which charted high in the United States and the UK—two greatest hits collections and at least four live albums.

Named after a brand of jukebox (Americana), America has been hailed for its acoustic sound with folk-country influences. At one point, it even rivaled the popularity of Crosby, Stills and Nash and The Eagles.

Recognized as Grammy's Best New Act of 1972, it has performed with the biggest names in the music world including Elton John, Pink Floyd and The Who. It has also collaborated in several albums with the most successful producer of all time, George Martin of the Beatles.

In the Philippines, even some of its songs that did not place high in hit charts abroad still figure heavily on radio and karaoke play lists.

Foremost among these is "All My Life," which was even turned into the title of a blockbuster Filipino movie just last year.

Another is "Inspector Mills," a favorite sing-along number in the league of "It Might Be You" and "Just Tell Me You Love Me."

"Ventura Highway" might not be remembered by the MTV generation instantly—until they realize that the guitar riff in the song was recently sampled by the icon herself, Janet Jackson, in her 2002 Top Five Hit "Someone To Be My Lover!"

Another notable smash by America is "You Can Do Magic," a No. 1 ditty in 1982 that came with a novel video featuring hands (attached to nobody) shuffling a deck of cards. The tune was a big departure from America's simplistic approach to music of just guitars-and-vocals and utilized electronica instead, very much en vogue when New Wave reigned.

Still and by far, the three biggest hit songs by America worldwide are "Sister Golden Hair," "Tin Man" and "A Horse with No Name."

The first was released in 1975 and is credited for toppling John Denver's "Thank God I'm A Country Boy" from the No. 1 spot after several weeks.

The lyrics of "Tin Man" are a favorite subject in Internet chat rooms among American aficionados still trying to decipher what the song's references to the "The Wizard of Oz" really mean.

And, of course, "A Horse With No Name." Originally titled "Desert Song" until the band realized there was an old musical named similarly, it was the group's maiden single and first No. 1 ever.

"America's Greatest Hits: Live at the NBC Tent" is also brought to you by Makati Shangri-La, official residence of America in Manila; Smart Buddy, Smart Infinity, Petron Blaze, and media partners NBC, Manila Bulletin, ETC Entertainment Central, GMA 7, JOey 92.3, 105.1 Crossover, 99.5 RT, 95.5 DM, 93.9 iFM, 91.5 Energy FM and Yes FM 101.1.

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John Ford Coley join other hitmakers

'I'D REALLY Love to See You Tonight," "Sad to Belong," "We'll Never Have to Say Goodbye Again."

These three pop all-time favorites continue to get heavy airplay on Philippine radio stations whose play lists are dominated by love songs—and there are a lot of these stations. The singer, Grammy-nominated John Ford Coley, stars in a series of Manila Valentine concerts titled "Golden Legends," with two other hitmakers: Gordon Waller, of the 1960s heartthrob duo Peter and Gordon, and Latino idol Chris Montez.

Presented by Steve O'Neal Productions, the three-in-one show is set at the Aliw Theater, CCP Complex on Feb. 12, and Hard Rock Café on Feb 13 and 14.

Coley, who replaces Dennis Yost of the Classics IV, is still an active performer around the US, and has appeared on several movies and TV shows. He has also written music for TV and films.

Over the years, he has performed with Elton John, Heart, Fleetwood Mac, Chicago, Carole King, Bread, Three Dog Night, Loggins and Messina, Led Zeppelin, Carly Simon and Air Supply.

Performing with the three are Area One featuring John Lesaca, and Ramon "RJ" Jacinto. Tickets are available at Ticket World outlets, Tower Records stores, National Bookstore, the Ayala malls and Robinsons at P800, P1,500, P2,500 and P3,200. Call 891-9999.

The Hard Rock shows will include dinner and wine. Seats are limited. For reservations, call 893-4661 to 64.

COLEY is still active around the US.

Judge: Jurors can see Jacko's collection of sex materials

SANTA MARIA—Michael Jackson was dealt a blow just ahead of the start of his child molestation trial when a judge ruled Friday that jurors can see a collection of erotica seized at his home.

At the last pre-trial hearing ahead of the start of jury selection on Monday, Judge Rodney Melville allowed prosecutors to present a collection of sexually oriented books, magazines and movies seized at Jackson's Neverland Ranch.

Prosecutors successfully argued that the books, magazines, videos and pictures were important, as they allegedly show Jackson's sexual interest in children or that he uses them in an alleged attempt to seduce youngsters.

But while granting a prosecution request to show off the racy adult items, the judge ordered that they cannot be called "pornography, obscene or erotica" in front of the jury, as those terms carry legal significance.

"I will grant the motion, but the material cannot be called pornography or obscene," Melville said, ordering prosecutors to instead use the terms "books, magazines, adult material or sexually explicit" items.

Jackson lawyer Brian Oxman argued unsuccessfully to exclude the 32 magazines, 17 books, two DVDs and images found on a computer from evidence at trial.

Critical evidence

He said the magazines and books were irrelevant, as they were available in "any corner drugstore" or bookstore, and noted that the videos were of a heterosexual nature.

But prosecutor Ronald Zonen contended that the items were critical evidence which "reflects a sexual interest in children or was used to show to children to reduce their sexual inhibition and make them more accommodating to his (Jackson's) advances."

Jackson's trial starts with jury selection on Monday. *AFP*

LOVE AT THE BELLEVUE
The timeless Jose Mari Chan serenades sweethearts with his classic melodies at The Bellevue Hotel, Alabang's business and leisure hotel, in its very first major concert in its Grand Ballrooom on Valentine's Day. Janet Basco will be Joe Mari's special guest. Among the sponsors are BMW, HSBC, Pepsi, Joey 92/3 and 105.1 Crossover. Call 771-8181.

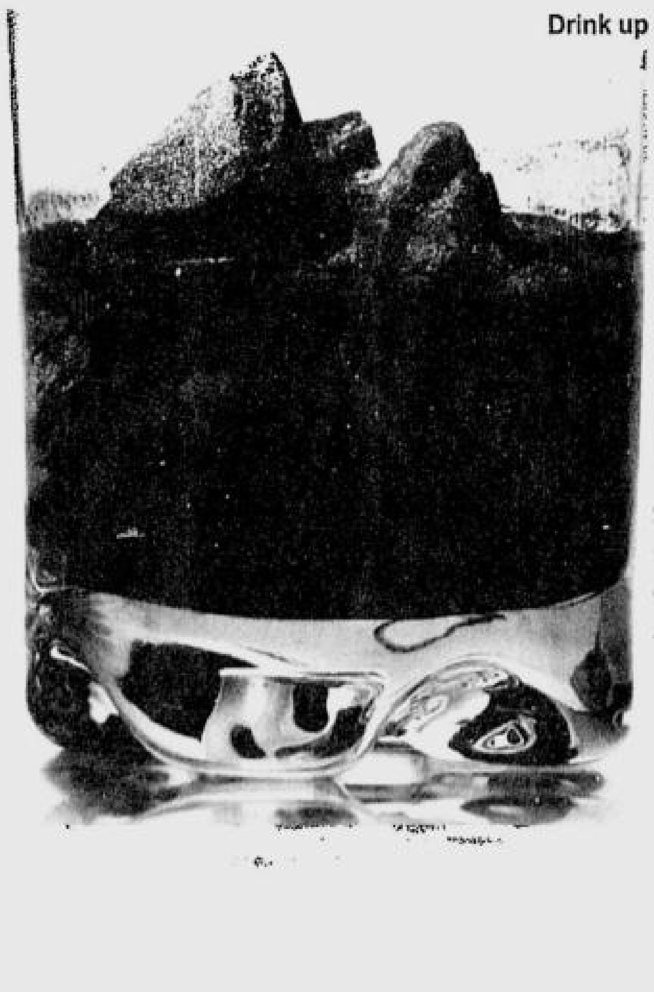
Sundance begins

PARK CITY, Utah—After nine days of wall-to-wall movie screenings, Hollywood parties and frenzied wheeling and dealing, the 2005 Sundance Film Festival was Friday winding down to an exhausted but radiant finale.

"It's going very well," Geoffrey Gilmore, director of the world's premier independent film showcase, told AFP as the 11-day fest in this ski resort moved toward a climactic awards show over the weekend.

Hollywood stars such as Kevin Bacon, Marissa Tomei, Mary Steenburgen, Tom Arnold, and John Goodman have been spotted around town as festival fever hit full stride.

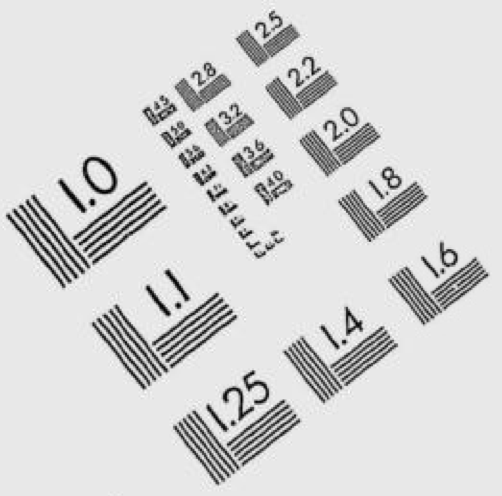
This year, theater lines for feature films are rivaled by documentary movies. *AFP*



Drink up or speak up. Our continued reliance on imported fossil fuels like coal and oil for energy is one of the largest reasons behind problems like global warming, air pollution, the rise in respiratory ailments, and the worsening condition of our water supplies. This dependence also leaves us economically vulnerable to the spiralling cost of coal and oil in the world market. And things will only get murkier unless we reduce our use of coal and oil and push for the increased use of renewable energy sources like geothermal, wind, biomass, hydro, and solar. Speak up and let the government know you want clean energy. Text WWF YES <Your Name> to 2366 for Globe (P2.50/text) or log on to www.powerswitch.org.ph/vote. Act now and help get the Renewable Energy Bill passed into law. Maybe then, the future won't be such a hard thing to swallow.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
WWF

IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)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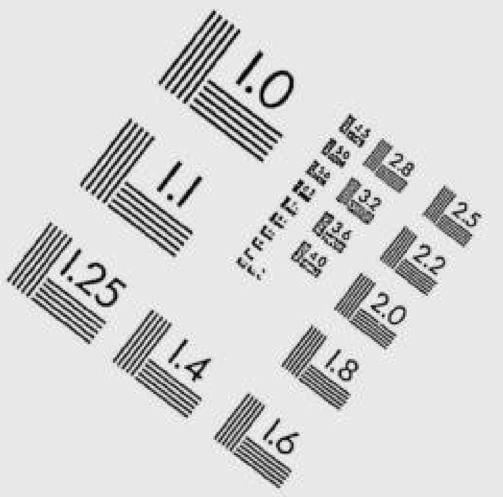
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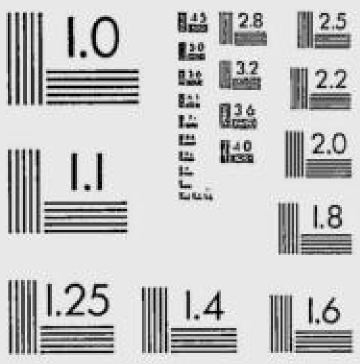
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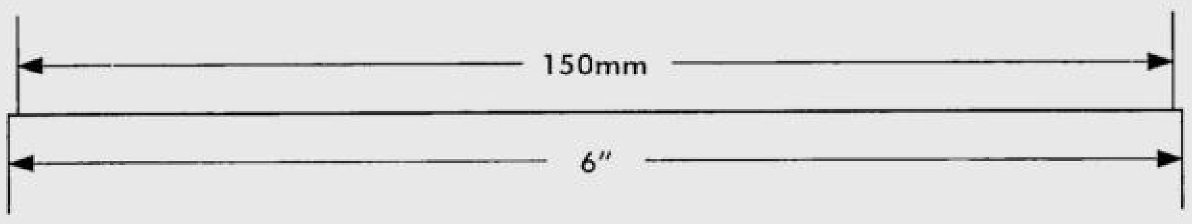

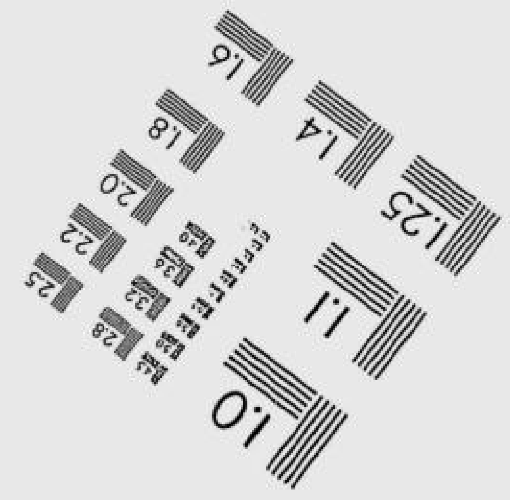
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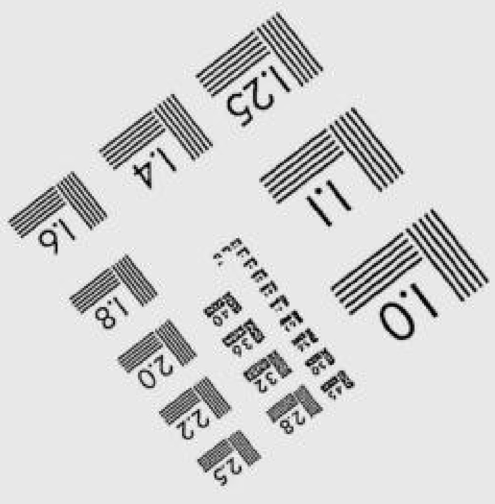
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FILMED: JULY 2005 REDUCTION: 19

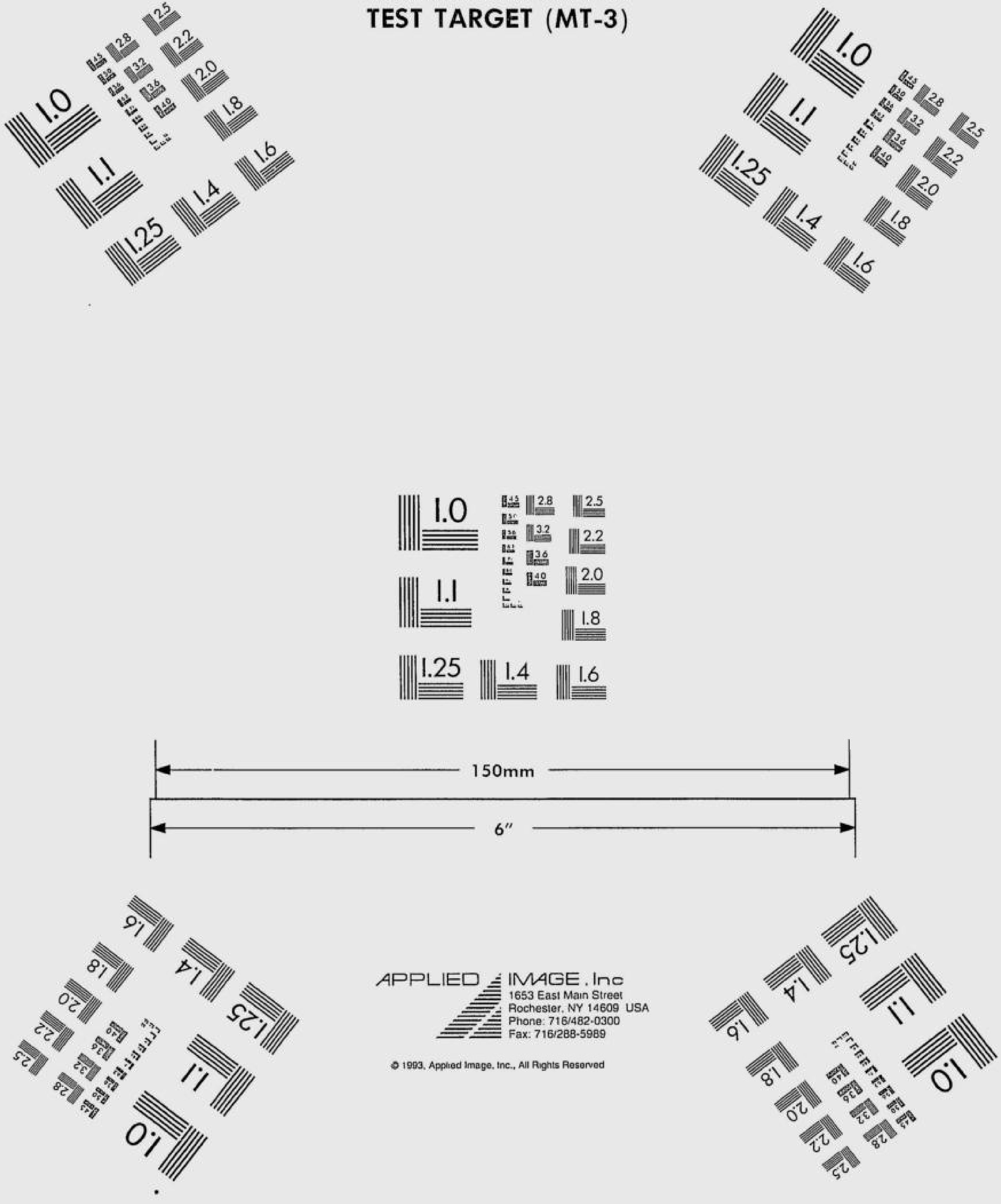
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

METRO MANILA, PHILIPPINES

JULY
1 THRU 15
2005

REEL 360

IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)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